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Cover: Landing Party
Official U. S. Navy Photograph

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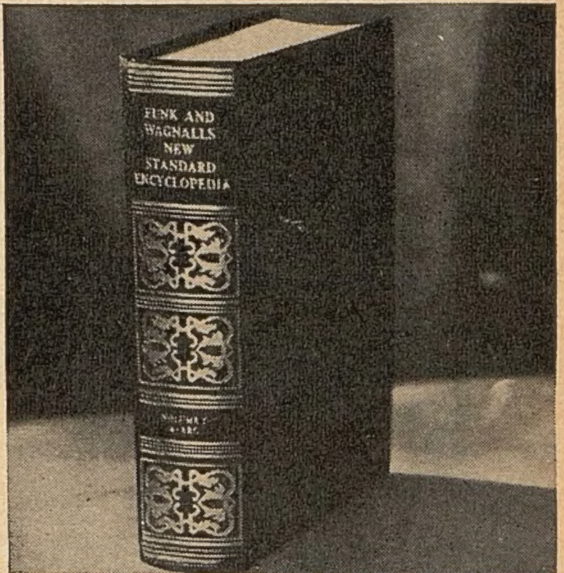

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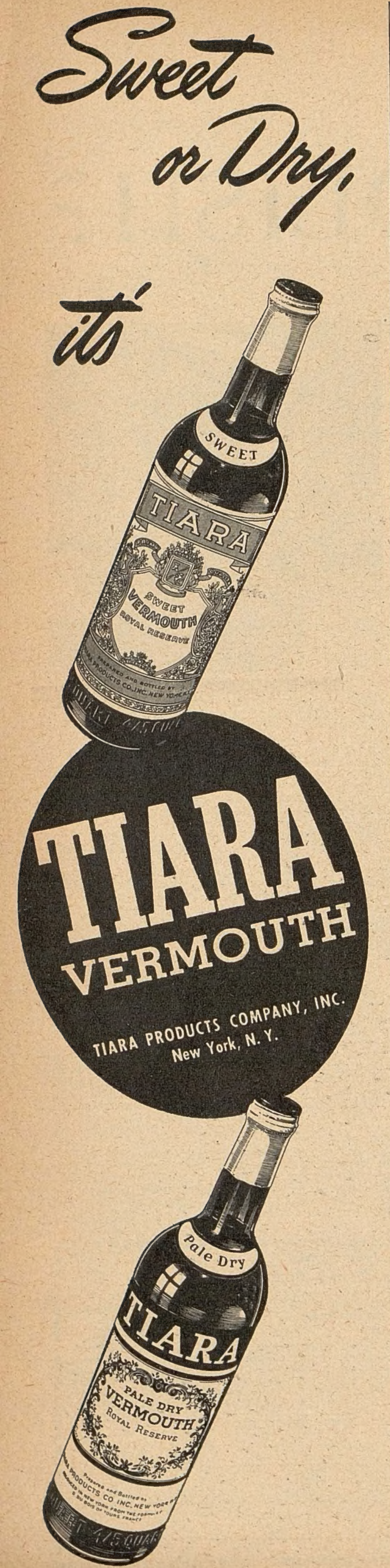
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VOX POP

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ARE THE "MOTHERS" A MENACE?

Boston, Mass.—I think your article The Menace of the "Mothers" (July 29 Liberty) is puerile and asinine. It seems to be an attempt to disparage and smear any and all groups throughout the country that have the courage—and I do mean COURAGE—to accuse the incumbent administration of having willfully led "we the people" into a needless involvement with the incessant wars of Europe.

In Vox Pop of June 24, one L. B. Jackson berates the "Hun controlled America First," and then goes on to state that he—of course—is for America first, etc. Such prattle, I'm sure, will only aid in confusing your readers. If the leaders of the "America First Committee" were "Hun controlled," why hasn't our native Gestapo, the F. B. I., brought these "Huns," such as Lindbergh, General Wood, Gen. Hanford McNider, Senators Wheeler, Nye, David I. Walsh, and so many others, to trial?

I am an "America Firster," a "Coughlinite," and a firm believer in the principles expounded by these various "Mother" groups.—*James M. Connors.*

Cleveland, Ohio—I can't praise your magazine too highly for that wonderful article on the mother menace.

In the past, the Cleveland Press has exposed these so called mothers in Cleveland. The lies that these groups have filled Cleveland with are a danger to the American way of life. If you dare to oppose them by writing letters to our newspapers, you are then called on the phone all hours of the night and threatened in language that is unfit for mothers.—*Mrs. Walter J. Pressby.*

FAN MAIL

Bronx, N. Y.—I feel that William L. Shirer's splendid article Who Can Take Over In Germany? (July 15 Liberty) deserves a letter. It is one of the best articles I have ever read on this subject.—*Mrs. V. S. Wynne.*

PROFILES PREFERRED

Richmond, Va.—I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed The Navy's New Boss by Edwin Diehl (July 22 Liberty). Brief and vivid biographies of outstanding personalities of our time are not only interesting reading, but also enable us to know better the outstanding figures of the current American scene. In thus presenting leading men or women to the public, both you and Mr. Diehl are rendering a valuable public service.—*Henry M. Brinckerhoff, Jr.*

EDITOR'S CORNER

Camp Blanding, Fla.—Your editorial Story With a Moral for Statesmen (July 29 Liberty) deserves the praise of every thoughtful reader.

It is my prayer that responsible officials to whom the article is particularly addressed will not break faith with our dead who gave their lives for an equitable and an enduring peace.

I sincerely hope that you will not get tired of influencing others through your medium with your lofty ideals.—*Pvt. Jose B. Totaan.*

Winchester, Ind.—So often your editorials have hit the nail right on the head. This time, July 29 Liberty, this is again strikingly true.

Please keep up the good work. If there is any way possible that we the people can control the situation and make civilization and Christianity worthwhile, let us do it now.—*Roy E. Steele.*

Waukegan, Ill.—Paul Hunter's editorial Isolation is Death for America (July 22 Liberty) should have definitely read "Internationalism is Death for America."

If Benedict Arnold were alive today I am sure he would be a big shot of some kind in our New Deal of un-Americanism.

Another kind of dictatorship, using money and food, is being set up to *force* nations to join together for a time. But it will lead only to the greatest trouble the world has ever known yet.—*John Davison.*

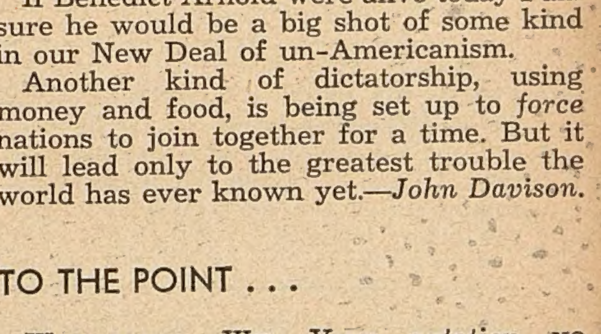
TO THE POINT . . .

Watertown, Wis.—Your notation NO LONGER CONNECTED WITH MACFADDEN PUBLICATIONS OR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE is all I want to know.

Now I shall buy Liberty from my drugstore—EVERY WEEK!—*Louis C. Shimon.*

LIBERTY BUNDLES

Fond du Lac, Wis.—On February 1 I wrote you regarding the plan of Voiture 738 of the Forty & Eight of extracting the condensations from Liberty and binding them in booklet form of four or five stories each. This letter was published in Vox Pop March 25 and the response from it was great. At the present writing, I have received bundles of stories from seven states.



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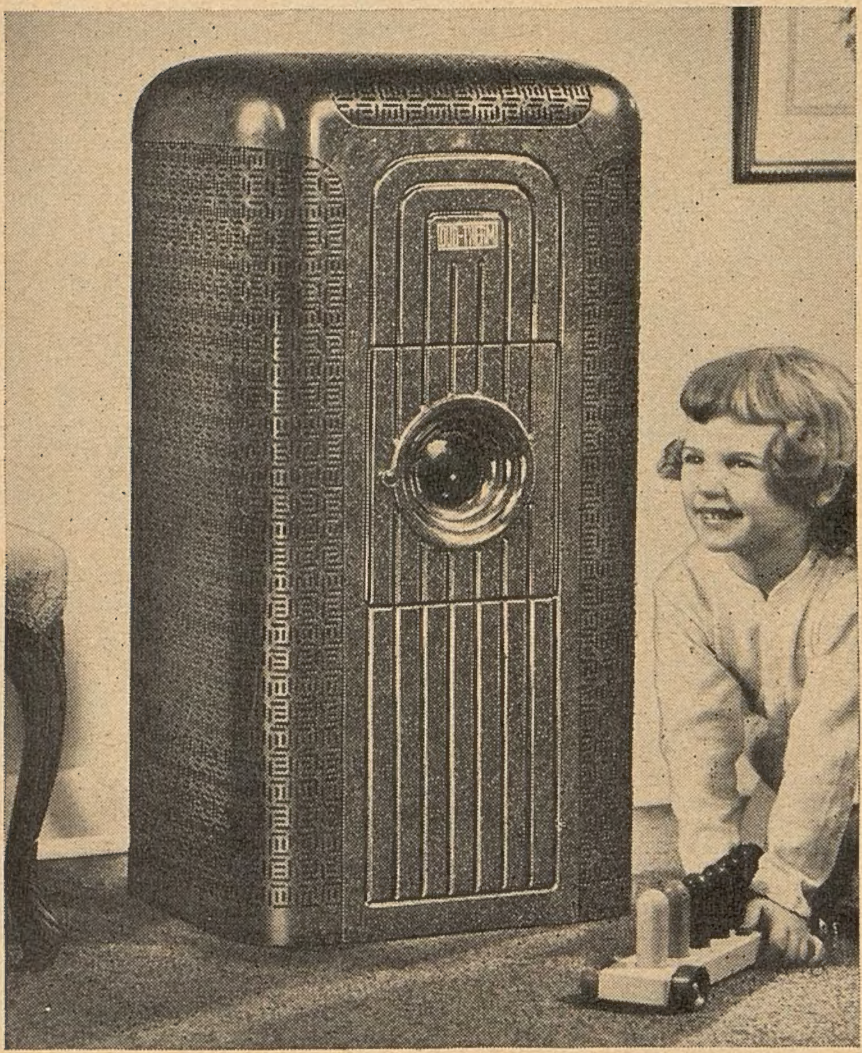

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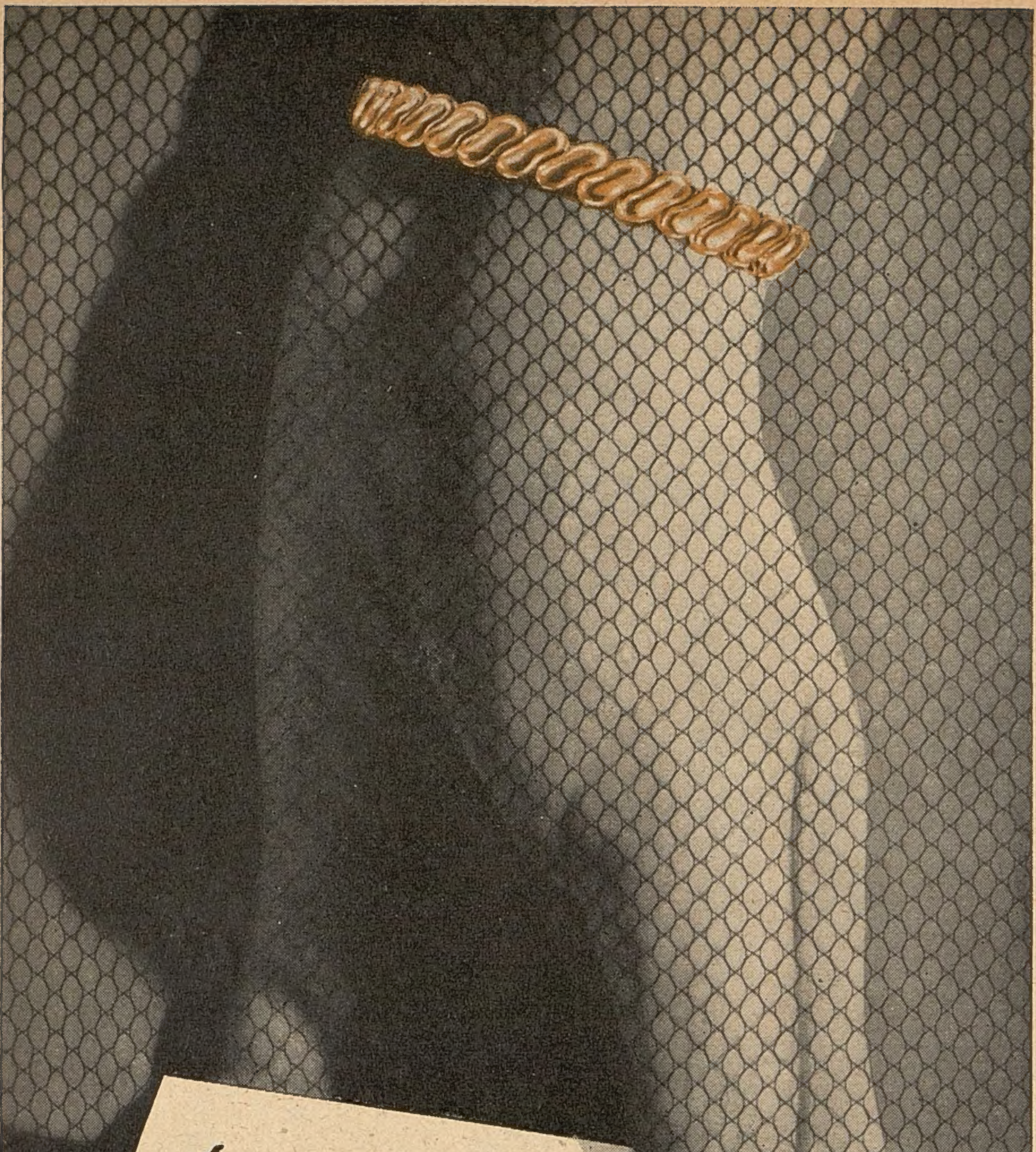

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ready for shipment to a Fond du Lac boy's outfit in the South Pacific. He was wounded and is now acting as recreational director. Being a lieutenant, he is in a position to see that these are distributed properly among the boys.

Fond du Lac County Voiture 738 of the Forty & Eight wishes to thank you for your help and co-operation. You print 'em and we'll ship 'em.—*R. S. "Buzz" Timmons, Correspondant, Voiture #738.*

CALLING ALL REPUBLICANS

c/o Fleet Post Office, San Francisco—The assailing of our President by R. F. Williams and Mrs. A. Blanshine (Vox Pop July 8) would be amusing were it not so disgusting.

Admittedly the New Deal has made mistakes; it has also produced many good results. Speaking of "Return to fundamentals of government," Mr. Williams, do you mean the pitiful efforts of Harding, Silent Cal, and Hopeful Herb Hoover and their twelve years of totally blank ticker tape? Can you point out even one accomplishment of that stupid regime as proof that the G. O. P. could do better than the present administration? No wonder we hear squeals about dictators and dictatorship! A drowning man grasps at the last straw; how natural that they resort to their only weapon—the brickbat.

McCARTHY FOR PREXY
F C

Too bad people can't see how blatant and hollow their razzing of the President sounds. But sportsmanship never was the G. O. P.'s long suit. Dewey is their godsend; they are at a stage where they'd almost run Charley McCarthy if they thought he could win. If they *were* to run him, they could always find yahoos like Williams to campaign for him.—*V. E. V.*

STUMPING FOR STOWE

Lebanon, N. H.—Orchids to Liberty for printing a condensation of Leland Stowe's They Shall Not Sleep (July 15). Every American should read it and take it to heart.—*Mrs. R. E. L.*

Blackville, S. C.—The most comprehensive study of Russia and China that I have yet had the privilege of reading is the book condensation They Shall Not Sleep by Leland Stowe. The book has a sincerity lacking in most books written on these—the least understood of our allies. Another remarkable fact is that it overlooked none of the dark points of the Russian and the Chinese governments, which many books are prone to do, and which create merely an illusion as to the true state.—*Pvt. James Frank Kneece, Jr.*

THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!

Long Beach, Calif.—This is to thank you for indirectly reuniting two cousins who hadn't heard from each other for over thirty-three years. It happened like this:

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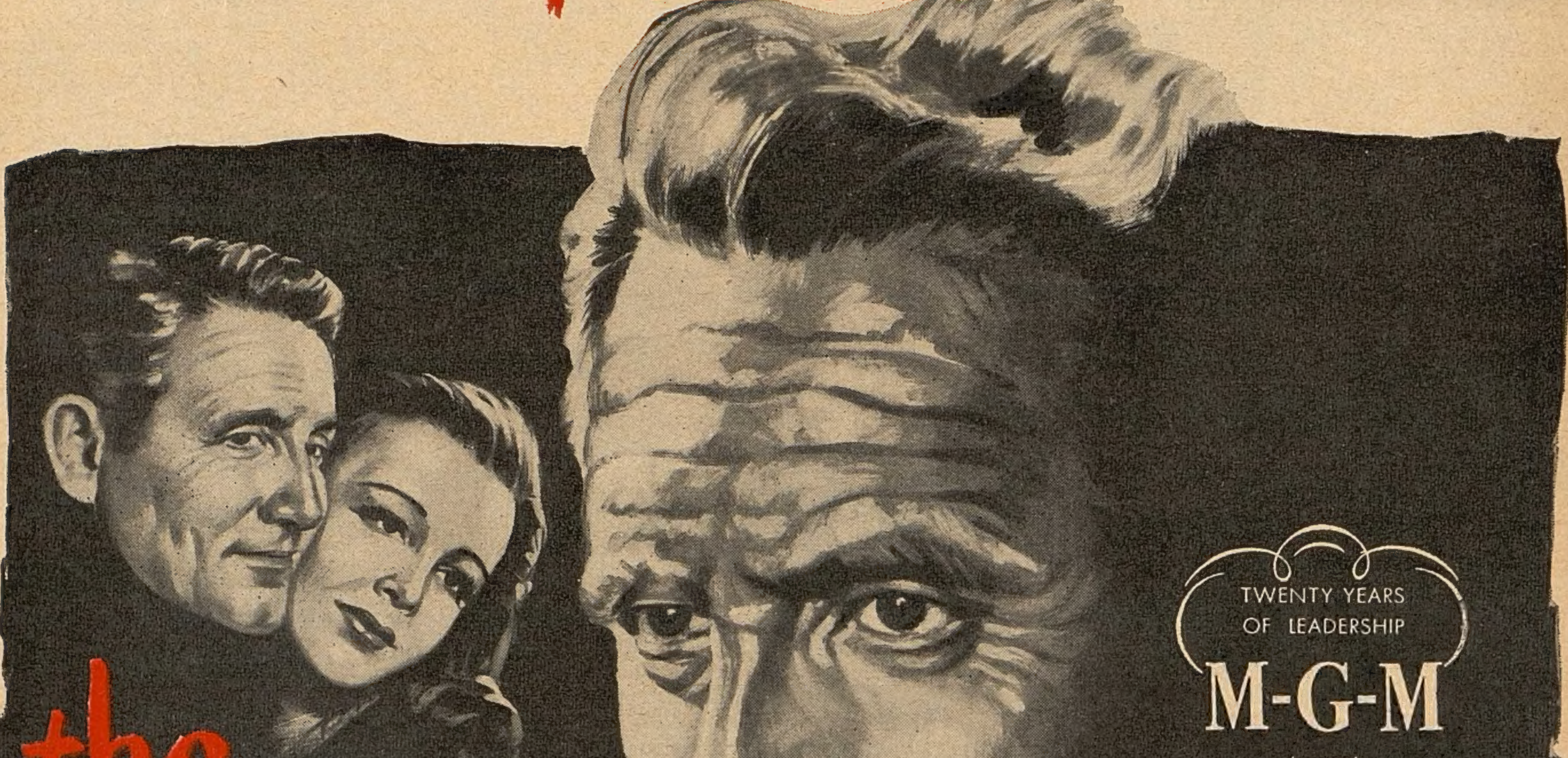
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IMPORTERS AND RECTIFIERS
New Orleans 12. LA.

twenty-nine months chanced to see this little item and, because his last name was the same as my own, enlisted the aid of the Red Cross to find out if I was related to him in any way.

Anyone can well imagine the thrill I felt when I received a call from the Red Cross and learned that this serviceman is my husband's cousin! Their fathers were separated thirty-three years ago and had lost all contact with each other. If it had not been for that small item in your column, they might never have found each other again.

It seems almost too much like fiction to be true but it IS true and I wish to thank you for making it possible.—*Mrs. Edith Shrotman.*

TAKE A BOW, FLEISCHMAN!

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—I want to thank you for the fine Short Short story Take a Letter, Cupid (July 29 Liberty). As a Navy man I found it well within the realm of plausibility, but in addition I thought the author, A. S. Fleischman, did an excellent job of handling the situation. His manner was quite novel and very refreshing. I hope that we see more of the work of this writer. —*Arnold M. Cowan, U. S. N. R.*

HE GOT MALARKEY

DULUTH, MINN.—I enjoyed A. D. Rathbone IV's article, It's Not Malarkey, John (July 15 Liberty) very much. But as a soldier, honorably discharged, may I tell you of my experience?

I have no shame in saying I hold an "NP" or "neuropsychiatric" discharge, for I am not alone. Rathbone says that 45 per cent of the men being released from service have "NPs." However, this label makes it very difficult to get a job.

Shortly after I got back to Duluth I went to a branch office of one of the nation's largest corporations. My experience was so unforgettable that I have not tried to secure a position since. My $200 from the government is paying my board and room.

Let us hope that the things mentioned in the article do come true—that it will be possible for fellows like me to secure jobs, get married and settle down, and, perhaps, some wonderful day to own our own home.—*F. A. Richardson.*

TIP-OFF ON SHANE

LYNN, MASS.—I have read all the letters about Ted Shane's Puzzle and the paper it is now being printed on. I know the servicemen like the puzzles especially, but they also like the whole magazine. So, may I offer a tip?

I have been sending my Liberty to the South Pacific since last January. I send mine to my brother, but it always makes the rounds.

The cost? Either eighteen or twenty-four cents, according to the weight. First-class mail.

I just slip it into a large envelope and seal and off it goes.—*M. Lee.*

NEXT WEEK

A WALK IN THE SUN

By Harry Brown
Liberty's Book Condensation

The word "invasion" will have new meaning for you after you have read this fast-paced, compellingly real novel written by a soldier. Told with inspired simplicity, it's the story of a small group of typical American doughboys and their tense journey from an Italian beachhead to a German-occupied farmhouse inland.

IS ARGENTINA HEADING TOWARD WAR?

By Blair Bolles

Events in Argentina seem to be repeating the pattern set by Hitler's Germany. Here's the story of what we're doing to meet this new menace.

WHOSE MAN IS DEWEY?

By Gretta Palmer

What turned the Republican nomination race into a one-man parade for Dewey? Who's behind him—the Bosses? Wall Street? Labor? The Old Guard?

ERIC IN THE BEAR'S DEN

By Robert Magidoff

Eric Johnston, president of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, came back from his tour of Russia with some pretty strong impressions. And he left some strong ones behind him, too. Here's a report on his trip from the Russian viewpoint.

G. I. JOE'S BILL OF RIGHTS

By Old Sarge

Liberty's expert on matters G. I. explains what's coming to servicemen and servicewomen in the way of benefits—and how it's likely to work out.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT IN UTOPIA

By Fredda Dudley

The inside dope on the men and women who *really* control the movie industry—the censors. They're busy people, what with keeping a watchful eye out for everything in Hollywood from beds to baboons—not to mention the body beautiful.

MEET THE SUPERMEN

By Erika Mann

The old starch has gone out of the Nazi arrogance now. A front-line report on what some of the Supermen captured in France have to say for themselves now.

SIXTY SECONDS IS FOREVER

A Short Story

By Eleanore Kelly Sellars

A girl whose husband is gone, but not forgotten, finds that memories are both sweet and bitter—but living with them is not nearly so satisfactory as learning to live again.

Now, Through ZENITH RADIONIC RESEARCH . . .

A QUALITY HEARING AID

Both Millionaire and Average Worker Cheer!

Note Zenith's New NEUTRAL-COLOR EARPHONE and CORD. Blends with any complexion. No extra cost.

Yes, *Both* Choose the New Zenith Radionic Hearing Aid Because of Zenith's Leadership in Radionics

AMERICA'S hearing aid wearers . . . regardless of income or walk of life . . . have found a common bond in ZENITH QUALITY!

Many who wore the highest-priced hearing aids are now wearing the new Zenith Radionic.

How can Zenith give so much for so little? First, because all of Zenith's great engineering skill is concentrated on "Radionics Exclusively." Second, because a hearing aid is essentially part of a radio. And Zenith is the company where leadership in precision mass-production lowered the price of a $200 radio to $29—*and made it a better instrument.*

A parallel example is that of the fine watch and automobile manufacturers. The watch you carry is a *precision* mass production product. Otherwise, it would cost you ten times as much and not be as accurate. Zenith has applied the principle of *precision* mass production in "Radionics Exclusively" to hearing aids. From a handmade first model costing over $50,000 to build, the Zenith has become the world's most popular hearing aid and an even *finer* instrument at $40!

What's more, you can fit the Zenith yourself, adjust it INSTANTLY for different voices and surroundings as easily as you focus binoculars! This eliminates salesmen's high commissions. It ends the need for elaborate testing and frequent "tinkering" by high-pressure attendants, costly home calls and other expensive "trimmings."

The result—Zenith's HIGHEST QUALITY, within reach of all! You owe it to yourself, your friends, to investigate. They want to enjoy *your* company as much as you want to hear them. Get a thrilling demonstration today. Or send the coupon below for free, complete details by mail.

$40 Complete, Ready-to-Wear

. . . with NEUTRAL-COLOR EARPHONE AND CORD—smartly styled, scarcely noticeable. Complements any complexion, has new "look of youth." Plastic earphone is light, comfortable, long-wearing. Plastic cord is kink-proof, washable, perspiration-proof. Gives far less clothing or friction noise than the old type of fabric-covered cord.

Also available, the New Bone-Air Zenith—for the very few who require this special type instrument . . . $10 more, complete.

CANADIANS! The New Zenith Radionic Hearing Aid is now available in Canada—*direct by mail only*—at $40 complete (Canadian currency) with no additional charge for transportation, duties or taxes! For details write our Canadian distributor, Dept. LI-13, Zenith Radio Corp. of Canada, Ltd., Guaranty Trust Bldg., Windsor, Ont.

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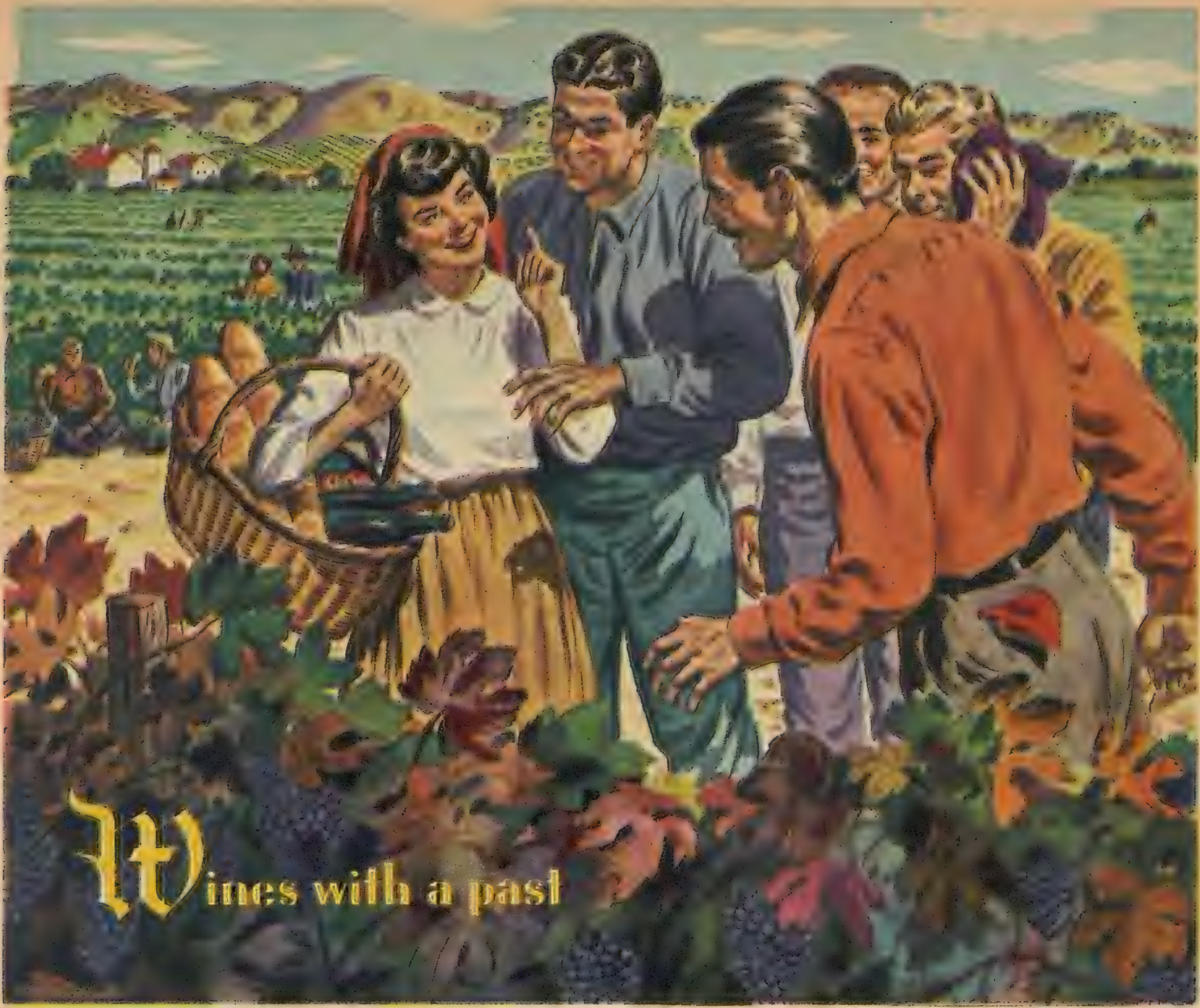

...for your pleasure today

TURN BACK half a century of time . . . and walk out into the vineyards of Italian Swiss Colony.

It is noon. The Colonists pause from their work . . . to rest in the shade of the vines . . . to talk and laugh and enjoy their simple mid-day meal.

Even today such a friendly scene is common at this quaint Colony in the hills of California's historic Sonoma County. For this is an unusual wine-making community, carrying on many traditions that began in the early eighties.

In 1881 the first vines were planted. Here in the *heart* of California's fine-wine country, they thrived *without irrigation*, as in great European wine districts. And from the sun-drenched grapes the Colonists made wines that soon were winning gold medals at world expositions.

Perhaps you cannot visit the fascinating vineyards of Asti. But you *can* have a bit of this Colony *brought to you* . . . in the form of its delightful table wines. Won't you try Tipo Red or White, for example? Or Gold Medal Label California Burgundy or Sauterne. You'll find these wines superbly fragrant and flavorful—as remarkable as the Colony itself.

Also . . . try Italian Swiss Colony's famous sweet dessert wines . . . such as Private Stock California Port, Sherry and Muscatel.

GOLD MEDAL LABEL
Italian Swiss Colony
CALIFORNIA
SAUTERNE
3 GENERATIONS OF
WINE-MAKING SKILL AT ASTI, CALIFORNIA

ITALIAN SWISS COLONY

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Witless, but witty, Tom Howard (on stool) and his band of cuckoo cohorts haven't answered a question yet.

MISINFORMATION PLEASE

BY TED SHANE

Tomfoolery Howard and his nutwork nitwits prove that it pays handsomely to be ignorant. Here are the inside dopes on radio's lunatic quiz show

"HASN'T a chance," the radio critics said when It Pays to Be Ignorant made its debut. "Too corny." Now, after more than two years on the air, without interruption, this loony lampoon of quiz shows has a Crosley rating just a notch under that of Information Please, a comfortable spot on a major network, CBS, and a satisfied sponsor, Philip Morris. The critics are still swallowing that corn.

Horn-rimmed-spectacled, cadaverous Tom Howard, as ignoramus-in-chief, receives $1,780 weekly for the privilege of putting the show on. This he splits among his assistants. "It pays," says Tom, "to be ignorant."

For some years now the legitimate quiz shows have been attempting to stuff the human noodle with a synthetic education. Howard's chamber of mental horrors is not really a quiz show. You won't even get a grammar-school education by listening to this program. In fact, it's guaranteed to get you kicked out of kindergarten.

Mr. Howard may begin the program by asking who wrote Mendelssohn's Wedding March. From this springboard his hilariously dumb board of inexperts plunges into a whirl of jokes and nonsense.

Tom Howard, who has a background of forty years of burlesque, vaudeville musical comedy, movie, and radio experience, has a theory. "I hit 'em in the eyes with the satire," he confides, "while I kick 'em in the pants with the gags. I deliberately picked old-timers for my experts. I figured their experience in show business would make the program sound ad libbed."

For, of course, not being a real quiz show, the program is not ad libbed any more than Jack Benny's is ad libbed. Nor does Howard deny the presence of corn on the program. "Not green corn, either," he admits, "but corn that has ripened on the vine of humor for years. You've got to figure every ten years corn becomes fresh again. New audience, y'know."

The history of this carefully rehearsed program of mad lib has a most romantic angle. A couple of years ago a tallish, stylishly stout commentator named Bob Howell was working on New Haven's station WELI with Ruth Howard, daughter of the lugubrious Tom. One day Bob told Ruth about a program idea he had kicking around his desk: Crazy IQs, a take-off on Information Please. Ruth enthusiastically sent it along to her father, and Howard, out of work at the time, was nuts about it. He tried to sell it to CBS as a sustaining program, but it was turned down.

Tom hauled the idea over to WOR—New York's Mutual outlet—and Roger Bauer, program director, bit immediately. Tom recruited a set of nutwork nitwits, and the show went so well that in a few weeks it had a sponsor—Piel's Beer. "It was a limited hookup," Howard says; "we got paid in peanuts and bottle tops."

For a time Howard & Co. played two networks. Then Philip Morris took over, lock, stock, and stupidity, and the show went on the same network that had turned it down originally.

And—oh, yes—Ruth Howard is now Mrs. Bob Howell. They married as soon as the show got a sponsor and now devote their entire time to writing the program. "No, she didn't marry him to keep the money in the family," drawls Tom Howard. "It was a case of Piel—sexa Piel, I mean. Life has been a Howell ever since."

The young folks sweat seriously and deliberately over their work, as do the others. Two weeks before the show goes on, they set down fifty to a hundred gags. Then each takes a pair of questions, such as, "How much does a three-cent stamp cost?" or "What color is the White House?" On them they string thirty minutes of gag, interruption, insult, and dizzy *non sequitur.* These hunks are then pieced together and polished with mental elbow grease. Tom, who is a walking gag file, a master of timing, and can measure a laugh down to the length of the side stitch it'll cause, goes over it all.

Friday afternoon, there is a long rehearsal at which the not-so-dumb dumbsters rehearse the script with Tom, studying and fitting it to their deliveries. Another polishing session follows at which the script is adjusted to the rehearsal audience's reactions. More weeds are pulled and better corn injected, and finally it's cut and ready for the air that night. All this is solemn proceeding, and I thought for a time I was at a bankers' conference. Such unfunny, painful preparation pays off.

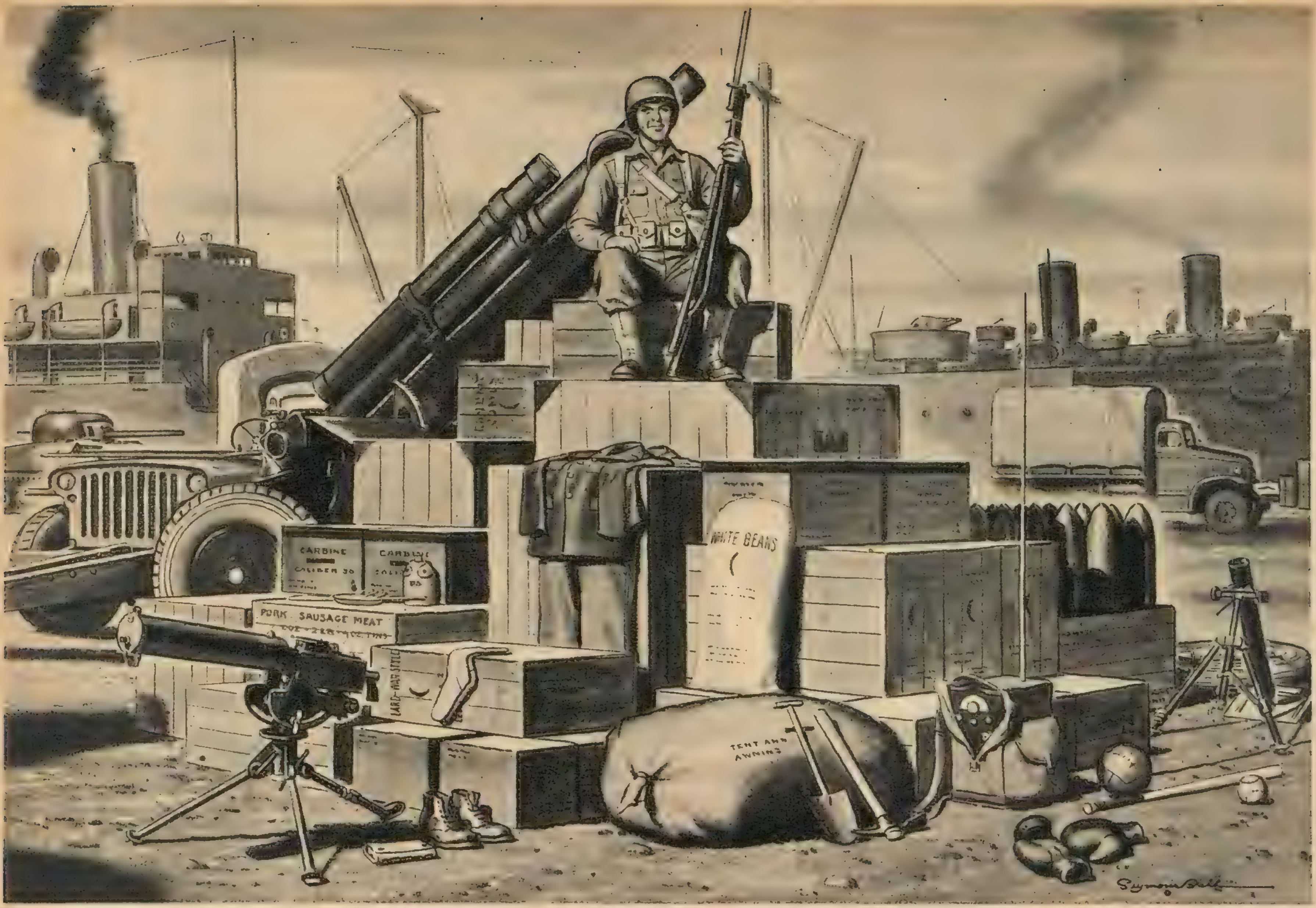
Tom Howard was born George Black in County Tyrone, Ireland, June 16, 1885. His family settled in Philadelphia the next year, and as Tom grew up his mother entertained hopes that he would enter the priesthood. But Tom had different ideas and eventually he became a grocery clerk. He might have been happy except that he didn't like to get up in the morning.

One day he saved up enough to sit in the peanut gallery at a vaudeville house, and was enthralled by a German comedian. He returned to see him again and again, and even memorized the fellow's routine. When Tom learned that actors didn't get up until noon, he decided to mount the boards himself. Changing his name to spare his ma's feelings and using his hero's spiel verbatim, he broke into vaudeville and got all of fifteen dollars a week for doing a dozen shows a day. The noon-rising habit is still enchanting to Tom.

Howard banged around vaudeville, medicine shows, burlesque and "carney" for some years, playing a timid soul of a thin man. In 1910 he married Harriet Berg, teamed up with her, and raised a family in the top drawer of a theatrical trunk.

In the 1920s he was wowing them on Broadway with an inane routine called The Spy in the Greenwich Village Follies. The act called for Tom to appear timidly in an enemy trench. A sign on his cap read SPY, and Tom would announce that he

(*Continued on page 61*)



G.I. Joe and his 12 tons of baggage

When an American soldier goes overseas, between five and twelve *tons* of equipment must go with him. And . . .

Another ton must be sent to him *every* month, in food, clothing, and ammunition.

Who sees that he gets it?

The colossal task of supplying our millions of men is the responsibility of the *Army Service Forces*. Theirs is the job of designing, procuring, and transporting every item of Army equipment except airplanes and items peculiar to the Air Forces.

From the time a soldier is sworn in, until his discharge, the ASF takes care of him. It feeds him the world's best army food, outfits him with the finest clothing, and supplies him with the most modern weapons. And it carries on a vast research program to insure still better equipment.

The ASF delivers a soldier's mail, pays him, provides religious services for him, and gives him the best of medical care.

The ASF is the biggest business in history. Without batting an eye, it fills rush orders from all over the world for stupendous quantities of some *half a million* different items—from aspirin tablets to steamboats.

Because the outcome of battles depends so much on getting supplies *where* they are needed, *when* they are needed, the motto of the ASF is "Enough and On Time."

The amazingly efficient way in which the men of the ASF are living up to their motto has made today's American soldier the best-fed, best-clothed, best-equipped, and best-cared-for fighting man in history.

Back the attack!—BUY MORE THAN BEFORE!

SPERRY
CORPORATION
30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20

This message is published by Sperry to foster a wider appreciation of the Army Service Forces as the vital link between the production front and the fighting front. Sperry cooperates with the ASF through these divisions:

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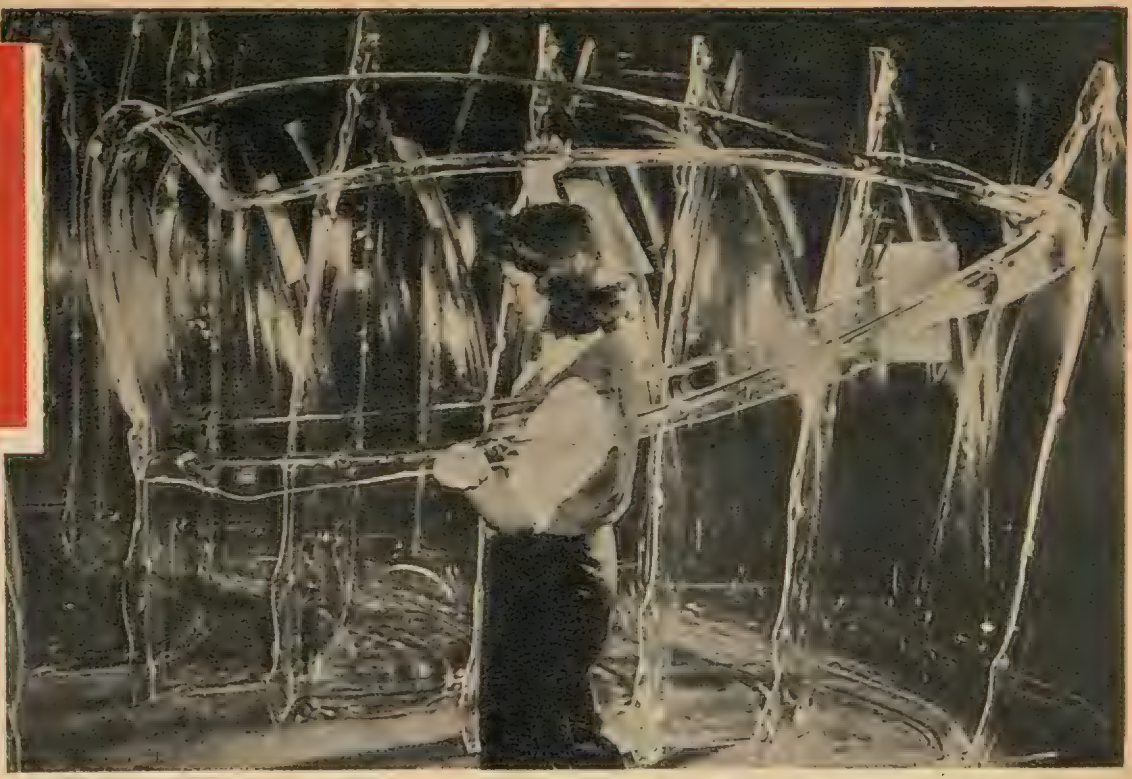
ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH



The new one-piece plexiglas canopy for the Republic Thunderbolt gives the pilot all-around vision and can take the buffeting at high speeds.

Plexiglas to the Fore

Pilots of Republic P-47 Thunderbolts are flying underneath a single sheet of ultra-transparent plastic which has been blown up like a soap bubble into a light-weight canopy. It's one of the newest uses of plexiglas developed by Rohm & Haas, and eliminates the struts and frames formerly used, and is actually more transparent than window glass.

Fighter pilots need the greatest visibility possible in all directions. It's as important to be able to see an enemy pilot coming from behind as to spot one ahead. In addition, the canopy hood must be streamlined to reduce wind resistance and drag, and must be as light in weight as possible. Every ounce of weight in a fighter plane counts.

The one-piece canopy is said to be a great improvement and is just another one of the constantly increasing uses to which this new plastic substance is being put in wartime.

Air Traffic Rules

Officials of the Federal government are now convinced that if hundreds of thousands of Americans fly their own or rented airplanes, there must be a substantial relaxing of the air regulations. Up until now the private pilot has been harassed by a massive set of regulations, including everything from a health certificate and periodical examinations to learning meteorology and taking written tests and filing plans for each flight he takes.

Put another way, the government in the past has endeavored to protect the pilot from himself. Today the trend in thinking is more toward protecting the public, much the same way that vehicular traffic is regulated to protect the public. Instead of massive regulations, the government is endeavoring to simplify these into simple "rules of the road." If a pilot wants to kill himself by recklessness, it will be up to the pilot; but if this recklessness interferes with the safety of others, he'll be severely disciplined.

This makes sense. The maritime rules for boating are extremely simple. The automobile driver has little red tape to suffer through in order to drive. But the private pilot has been beset by inspections and examinations and filling out of papers.

In fact, it can be said very flatly and truthfully that, unless the regulations are simplified and relaxed, there will be no mass volume of personal flying in this country. It's too much trouble for the business man and others who want pleasure, not trouble.

The truth is that the vast majority of owners of airplanes in the past decade have sold their airplanes rather than try to maintain them. It has not only been troublesome but quite expensive. The expense factor will decrease materially after the war, and as the number of airplanes increase. And signs now point toward a decreasing of the trouble factor, too.

Larger Planes and Larger Runways

Most people think that the larger the size of an airplane, the larger the airport must be for landing and taking off. This isn't true. As Edward P. Warner, vice-chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board and one of the nation's leading aeronautical engineers, has pointed out, the size of the airplane is virtually without direct effect upon the needed runway length.

Given constant ratios among weight, power, and wing area, and the same number of engines in each case, a 100,000-pound airplane needs no more space for take-off than one of 20,000 pounds and relatively little more for landing.

It all revolves somewhat around the wing-loading per square foot. What *does* require an increase in the length of runways is the increasing aerodynamic efficiency of the airplane—the placing of more load for each square foot of wing area.

As we have obtained more efficiency and economy in airplane operation, we have needed longer runways. But the mere size of the airplane hasn't anything directly to do with it. An airplane can be built to fit certain runway requirements if need be.

The old trimotored Ford transports could get in and out of small airports because the wing-loading was low, i. e., there was a greater ratio of wing area to gross weight of the plane. But the trimotored Ford didn't have speed or efficiency and economy of operation. The same holds true for the German Junkers JU-52 transports which are used in isolated areas in Latin America where landing fields are small.

Contrast those two older types with the modern streamlined transports of today and we find that the new transports, excellent and economical as they are, need longer runways for landing and take-off. But size hasn't anything to do with it.

But whatever the reasons, larger airports for transport planes are certain to come because it is necessary to build efficient airplanes for operating economy rather than build airplanes to fit maximum runway lengths. Mr. Warner predicts transports of 400,000 pounds gross load within fifteen years, or about four times heavier than the heaviest transport plane existing. Such a plane won't go into your backyard in any event; it'll need plenty of space to land and take off.

Helicopter versus Automobile

One reason why the proponents of helicopters are so enthusiastic about the potential market in their field is that the bulk of automobile driving before the war, 84 per cent in fact, consisted of journeys of less than 20 miles in length and over 90 per cent consisted of journeys less than 30 miles in length.

Of the total automobile passenger travel, only two tenths of one per cent consisted of trips from 250 to 500 miles in length, and less than two tenths of one per cent consisted of trips over 500 miles in length. Conventional-type aircraft will be used on long-haul trips, but helicopters for personal or commercial use might easily fit into the vast amount of movement within a 10-to-20-mile radius which most people engage in. If and when the time comes when a helicopter can land in your own backyard—and the engineers say the time is coming—the automobile may have an important competitor.

Trend in Air Cargo

You've been hearing so much about air cargo and air express, perhaps you'd like to know how the air-express volume has been increasing out of New York's La Guardia Airport.

During May there were 54,753 shipments, or more than 1,800 a day, a 27 per cent jump over May of last year. In terms of railroad cargo, this doesn't total much in tonnage; in fact, it's a mere drop in the bucket. But it does indicate a trend. The significant factor is probably the growing number of individual shipments, and not so much the tonnage involved.

THREE STORIES ABOUT THE BAZOOKA

Invasion Story

★ A German fort was causing considerable trouble to an American landing party. One soldier detached himself from the party, and waded ashore with a Bazooka. With one shot he knocked out the fort, and the Germans surrendered.—*From a report from the European theatre.*

Jungle Story

★ A Yank on patrol suddenly came upon two Japanese tanks. He slipped behind a tree, and let go at the nearest tank. The first rocket from his Bazooka blew up the tank, and its exploding ammunition set off the second tank. Score, two tanks with one shot!—*From a report from the South Pacific.*

Home Front Story

★ Back of the action stories of the Bazooka on the fighting front is an action-packed home front story of how the Bazooka was built.

On May 21, 1942, a U. S. Army pursuit ship slipped into an airport near a G-E plant. It carried an Army Ordnance officer, and instructions for General Electric to design and produce within thirty days several thousand rocket guns—an assignment so important that it took precedence over all other ordnance in the country.

Twenty-four hours later a G-E engineer came up with the design.

Four days later the first gun was turned out.

Then came the tests, at Aberdeen. For more than two weeks the Bazooka was tested and developed and improved until it had proved itself as a first class fighting weapon. Two men could handle it easily—one in an emergency—yet the Bazooka fired a projectile that could knock out a tank.

All that remained was to produce the quota, several thousand Bazookas, within the remaining eight days!

G-E men and women did it. Parts were rushed by plane and taxicab. Men and women worked through their lunch hours, and stayed over to help the next shift. And seven days after production started, while the first Bazookas produced had already been rushed into action on the Russian and North African fronts, the quota was made, with eighty-nine minutes to spare!

Since then General Electric has turned out hundreds of thousands of Bazookas, but the story of how the first several thousand were produced remains a tribute to G-E workmen, and another example of how G-E engineering and manufacturing experience work to meet America's needs—in war, and peace. *General Electric Company, Schenectady, N. Y.*

A $25 Bond Will Buy a Bazooka—Buy War Bonds—Keep All the Bonds You Buy

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Diplomats in step. Secretary Stimson and Myron Taylor depart from the Vatican after recent visit with the Pope.

PHOTO FROM PRESS ASSOCIATION

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

U. S. DIPLOMACY AND THE VATICAN

BY BURNET HERSHEY

Recent happenings have raised some points about our relations with the Vatican which puzzle many an American. Here is light on a problem as old as the nation

LATE in June Myron Taylor returned to Vatican City as the personal representative of President Roosevelt. On the same day the Vatican ran out of rosaries. The Pope had given away more than 18,000 of them in the four preceding days, most of them to American soldiers, officers, and nurses who had poured into the Vatican in a seemingly endless procession. Only the white rosaries which the Pope usually bestows on newly wedded couples were left.

The implications of these two events, Myron Taylor's return and the rosary shortage, are far deeper than most Americans realize. They converge into a single significant fact: Vatican-American relations, instead of drifting apart under the stress of criticism, have actually grown closer. In fact, they are even now directed at exploring further paths of collaboration.

Myron Taylor's fourth mission to the Holy See, this writer learns, is concerned more with questions of humanity than with political affairs. We are seeking the Pope's co-operation in three separate, but not unrelated, matters: (1) The peace settlement and the place of the State of Vatican City in a new world organization; (2) the continuing protection of imperiled minorities; and (3) the procurement of humane treatment for our prisoners of war. Further, the American President and the Head of the Roman Catholic Church have found a basis for an exchange of views on the long-sought rapprochement with Soviet Russia. An understanding and an agreement between the Vatican and the Kremlin would be an outstanding diplomatic achievement looking to the future peace of the world. It would go far toward ensuring the reorganization of Europe on a sound basis. If it can be achieved through American agencies, it will at once raise the standing of American diplomacy and statecraft all through Europe.

Secretary of War Stimson's recent visit to the Pope attests to the importance of this subject in Washington's eyes. It held immeasurably greater diplomatic meaning than any reception ever accorded an American emissary by a Sovereign Pontiff. The reason is Colonel Stimson's official position as the fourth-ranking officer of the American government, a status that gives him immense authority in European eyes. Likewise, Europeans have not forgotten that Colonel Stimson was at one time our Secretary of State and is fully acquainted with the delicate shadings of diplomatic usage. That Mr. Stimson's personal interview with the Pope should be followed almost immediately by the visit of the Polish-American priest, Father Orlemansky, for a private talk with the Holy Father increases the significance of these unprecedented events. Father Orlemansky's widely advertised talks with Premier Stalin are clear in everyone's memory.

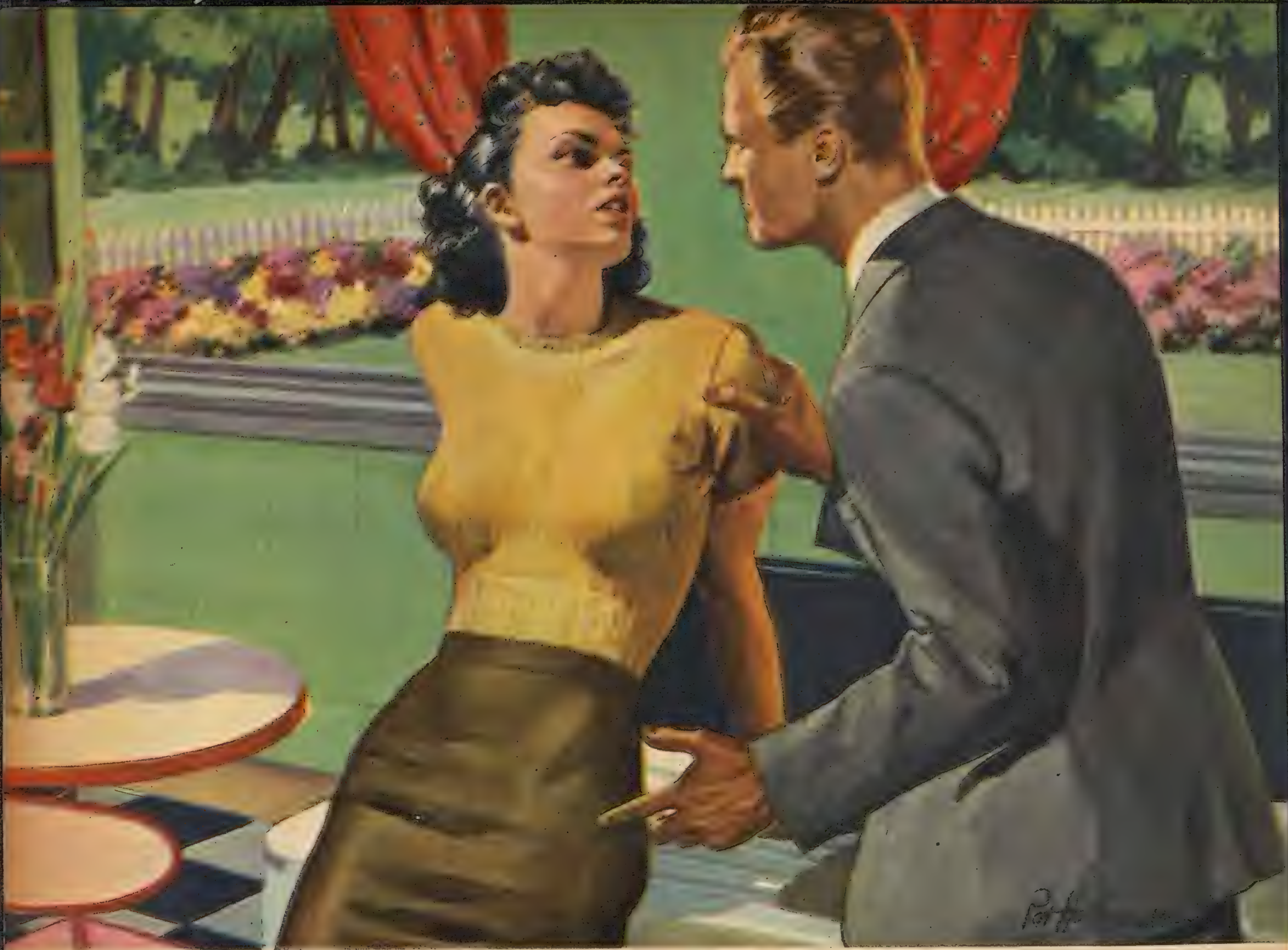
All this adds up to the possibility that preliminary peace negotiations will take place on the neutral ground of the Vatican. It must not be forgotten that envoys from all the enemy nations are in Vatican City. Unofficial conversations could easily take place under such circumstances. That is why, today, it is of the utmost importance to have the closest relations between Washington and the Vatican.

Of course, the Pope and the President have not been entirely in accord on all questions before them. No balance has yet been struck between the eight points of the Atlantic Charter and the Pope's Five Basic Principles for Peace as enunciated on Christmas Eve three years ago. The two programs have points of similarity, but also two serious differences. The Pope has said nothing about the destruction of Nazism, and he calls for general disarmament. His recent plea before the Cardinals for a peace of negotiation has widened these differences.

Yet the President sends his personal envoy back to Rome—a Rome liberated by Allied arms—at a time when domestic politics might seem to dictate a more cautious approach to dealings with the Court of St. Peter, a touchy business at all times.

Before November, this executive pro-

(*Continued on page 63*)



Rose leaned against the sink, placed trembling hands on the drainboard. Howie shouted, "I asked you if you liked it."

The BETTER THINGS

BY H. VERNOR DIXON

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

HOWIE stood by the unpainted shack facing San Francisco's teeming Embarcadero with a sinking feeling in his stomach. There were three other shacks nestled against the cliff, but they had been freshly painted. Only the Patterson house was as dirty as he remembered it.

Howie put down his cheap suitcase and lit a cigarette. He twitched his shoulders in the new gray suit and wiggled his toes in the new shoes. Civilian garb felt altogether too light and loose.

His face was burnt the color of saddle leather, his brown hair had streaks of amber, and his eyebrows had been bleached almost white by the tropical sun. The deep blue had been washed out of his eyes and pain wrinkles tugged at their corners. He looked older than his twenty-four years and, because of the weight lost in hospital, taller than his five feet ten. The set of his shoulders was that of a tired man, but one who has learned patience.

He flicked away the cigarette, picked up his bag, and mounted the half dozen rickety steps to the front door. He opened the door, blinked his eyes in the gloom of the hallway, then walked to the rear of the house where he heard sounds of water splashing.

Ma was washing clothes in a galvanized tub near the outer kitchen door. Laundry, other people's laundry, was piled about the room. Soapsuds were on the floor, the inevitable pot of cabbage was bubbling on the rusty stove, unwashed breakfast dishes were still on the oilcloth-covered table, and the new baby, John, Jr., was sitting in a high chair chewing on a rubber ball. His nose needed wiping.

The poignant story of a soldier who returned with a dream for the future and of a girl who supplied the blueprint for him that made it all come true

Ma heard Howie in the room and turned about. She was a large woman, with great hips and a huge bosom and large arms. Her hair was thinning, but a wisp of it hung in front of her eyes. She brushed it aside, still staring at Howie. Then she let out a deep breath, ran across the room, and hugged him to her ample bosom.

Howie grinned and patted her back. "Hello, Ma. How've you been?"

Ma cried for a little while, then she held him off at arm's length. She said, "You don't look so bad, Howie."

He nodded. "I wasn't wounded very bad."

Ma's smile faded and she screamed,

"Where was it them dirty Japs shot you?"

"Well," Howie replied, "I still gotta be careful how I sit down."

Ma stared at him, then started to laugh.

Howie chuckled. "Plenty guys get shot in the rump. It's hard to keep your hind end down when you're crawlin'."

Ma had already lost interest. She nodded her head at Junior, who was staring soberly at the two of them. "Whaddya think of the new kid?" She sighed. "He makes seven boys, five living. Them and the three girls is enough for one woman."

Howie patted the baby's head, but his eyes were staring into space. "You shouldn't ought to've had another one, Ma."

She shrugged, a self-explanatory gesture. Then she mumbled bitterly, "I'll wake up your pa. He's sleepin' off another drunk." Her voice rose as she said, "Since you left, two years ago, I'll bet he ain't worked three solid months all told."

She went into the hallway and Howie could hear her yelling up the staircase well. Her voice was high and shrill, and Howie tried to stop it, but failed to prevent a chill creeping up his spine.

PA was glad to see him, laughed and patted his back and pumped his hand and said over and over, "The return of the warrior, eh?" Pa's breath was terrible, his face was puffy and beet-red, his wrinkled head was now wholly bald, and two of his front teeth were missing. One of his suspender straps was broken and his patched trousers hung low on that side.

The old man whispered in his ear, "How about slippin' us a buck?" then rushed out of the house. He was back in a few minutes with a sixty-cent quart of sherry. Ma glared at him, but went back to her washing as Pa and Howie sat at the table and talked and drank the sherry.

The old man soon exhausted the news of the family. Bill and Ernie were working at the shipyards in Sausalito and living over there with their wives and kids. Jake was still living at home. He was a stevedore on the Embarcadero, getting good wages with plenty of overtime. Jake was married to Grace, one of the Lonnergan girls, who was in the hospital. Their kid had been born two days before, a girl. Howie's three sisters had all been married and living away from home for years.

Howie told how he had been wounded and Pa and Ma listened quietly; but when he was through, the two of them cursed the Japs. He slipped Pa another buck just before evening and they had a second quart of rotgut sherry. Then he explained about his medical discharge. It took that a long while to sink in.

Pa shouted, "So you can go back to work!"

Howie nodded. "Yeah. I guess so."

Pa beamed at him and slapped his arm. "That's more money in the family. Ma'll only charge you sixty bucks a month room and board." He leaned over the table in a confidential manner. "Look, Howie. You know how I stand with Mulligan, the stevedore boss. I'll talk with him first thing in the mornin'—"

Howie interrupted him with a shake of his head. "Not right away, Pa. I'm gonna think things over for a few days."

Pa was expansive and generous under the influence of the sherry. "Sure, sure, my boy. Take your time. Them two bucks you slipped me'll pay for your first day."

Ma spun about and screamed, "They sure won't, you drunken fool! I can't run this house on wind or what you drink. Howie'll pay his board to me, not to you, or he don't stay here. See?"

When they had quieted down, Howie ave his mother sixty dollars. He bit his lip and said he was going for a walk. He would eat out.

Howie walked along the Embarcadero and watched the great ships being loaded for distant ports, some of which he knew. He stopped in a water-front saloon and had a glass of tap beer, but failed to recognize anyone. He turned the corner onto the lower end of Market Street and was jostled by a crowd of sailors on leave.

One of them said out of the corner of his mouth, "Get the 4-F, mates."

Howie stopped and faced the one who had spoken. "You been overseas?" he asked.

The youngster snarled, "What's it to ya?"

Howie said quietly, "I just got back. I was at Tarawa and Kwajalein and a couple places you punks never heard of. I got the Purple Heart in my duffel bag. You punks got one you'd like to trade for it?"

The sailors shuffled uneasily, then hurried off up the street. Howie stepped into the closest restaurant, which was also filled with sailors. The waitress stood listlessly at his side as he ordered, then suddenly leaned down and stared into his face.

"For Pete's sake! Howie Patterson!"

Howie looked up at her. She was fairly tall, with a slim and seductive build, coal-black hair, brown eyes, and a wide grin. She wore a snug-fitting white starched uniform, invitingly unbuttoned below the collar. Make-up was heavy on her face. The way she was leaning over, Howie could see the tight fullness of a snug bra.

He finally recognized her and grinned and shook hands. "Well, Rose Engelhardt. Haven't seen you since we was kids."

"Oh, nuts. I seen you the day you left for the war. Whatcha doin' in civvies?"

"Medical discharge," he explained.

Rose shifted a huge wad of gum from one side of her jaw to the other. "Yeah? Say, I'll bet you got plenty to talk about. How's about meetin' me after? I'll be through in an hour."

Howie frowned but said, "O. K."

She met him on the sidewalk an hour later. She was wearing a cheap skirt that barely reached her shapely knees, black mesh stockings, patent-leather shoes with ridiculously high heels, and a yellow cashmere sweater that was altogether too tight. She took Howie's arm, waved to some sailors she knew, then smiled at Howie.

"Where'll we go?"

Howie laughed. "Nowhere."

"Huh?"

"You heard me. I got things to think about. If you wanta come along, O. K."

She wavered for a moment, then laughed and squeezed his arm. "What a novelty this'll be. Lead on, Macduff."

Howie stopped a taxicab and directed the driver up the hill. They got out at Coit Tower and sat on the concrete wall and looked out silently over the bay.

After a long while Rose asked, "What's on your mind?"

Howie tugged at his right ear and replied, "It's hard to put in words. I been places, Rose. I seen things, funny things, and met people, different people. I come home and everything's like it always was. The old man still a souse and the house as filthy as ever."

HE was silent for a minute, then continued, "It's not the right way to live. I don't know what I'll do, but I'm not gonna live that way, that's a cinch."

"You sure got a bug in your bonnet."

"Well, I got reasons. Down in Los Angeles, once, a bunch of us was invited to some people's home in Beverly Hills. They give us cocktails and dinner and it was swell."

His eyes opened wide as he said, "Y' know, they had three fireplaces and five bathrooms in that house, and it wasn't so awful big either. The main thing, though, it was so clean. And the people, they didn't shout and scream at each other."

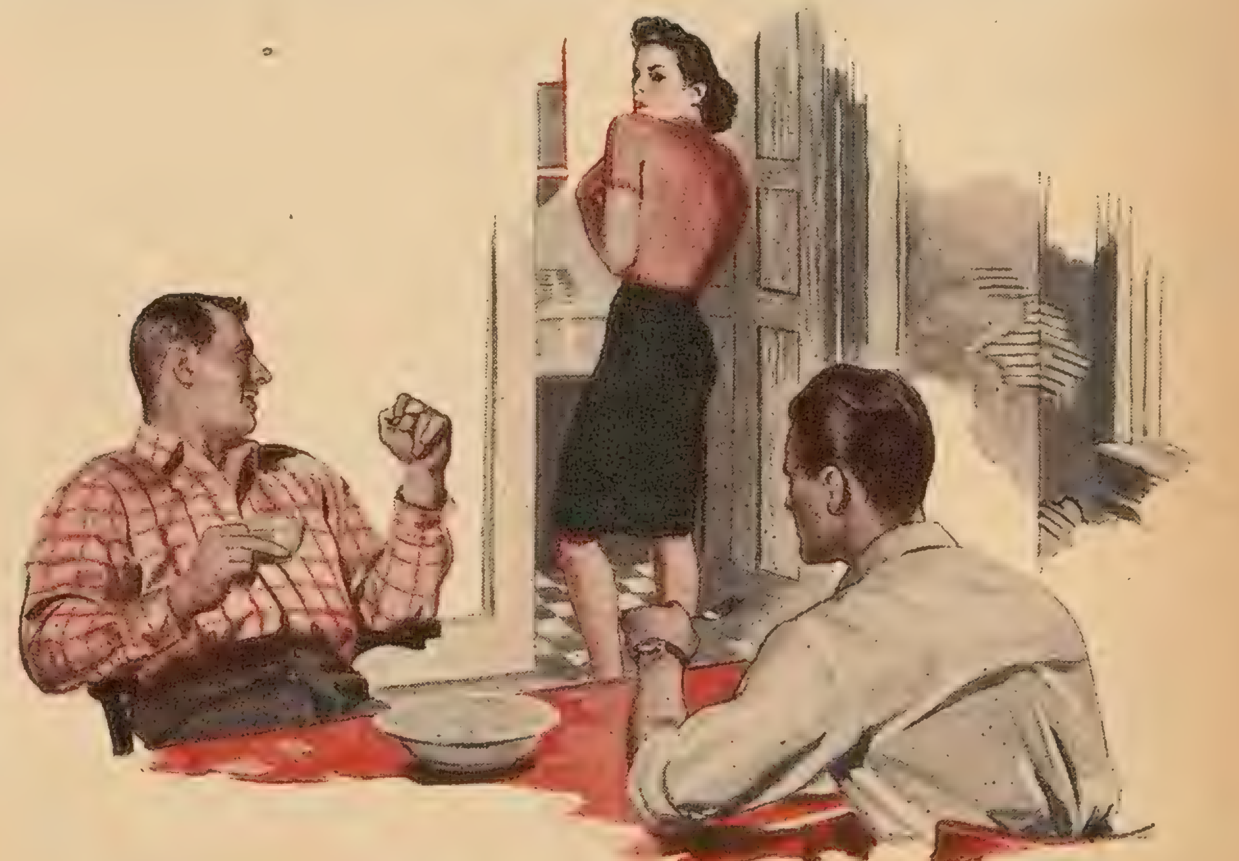
Rose snickered. "You, a social climber!"

Howie ignored her. He was really talking to himself. "People useta invite us out everywhere we went. I been in some nice homes, clean places. Not everyone had dough, but they were nice just the same. Then my buddy and me got discharged in San Diego. Nice guy by the name of Hal Davis. Him and me went through a lot together. But I didn't know much about him. I thought we was in the same boat."

"He had dough, huh?"

"Well, not so much. Anyway, him and his ma had a nice place up at Laguna, on the coast below L. A. Not big, but swell. The ocean breeze comin' through big wide windows, a fireplace in the living room, a kitchen so spick and span you could eat on

(Continued on page 68)



Rose was helping with the breakfast. Jake, burly and broad-shouldered, watched her swaying hips and winked at Howie. "Not bad," he commented.

Give a Seabee some empty oil drums and he can—well, shingle his tropic house.

BY

LIEUT. (j. g.) SEYMOUR F. STOWE, U. S. N. R.

and

CORP. W. D. ANDERSON,

Air Service Command

The repair facilities, as well as the comforts of home, are seldom available, yet our boys make do with the G. I. ingenuity to keep the war moving

The STRING-AND-SPIT BOYS

"IT'S the G. I. guy who is winning this war," said the colonel, who had spent two years at key air bases in the war theaters. "And by G. I., I mean guts and ingenuity."

The colonel happened to be referring to the courage and ingenuity of the doughboy-mechanics of the Army Air Forces' Air Service Command, but no branch of our armed services has a monopoly on the guts-and-ingenuity guys. Superior weapons and superior wits make a formidable combination, especially when they're backed by plenty of courage. But you've really got something when you've got a man who can make his wits do when he lacks the weapons—and *weapons* means anything that helps beat the enemy.

The one piece of equipment the American fighting man supplies himself is ingenuity. It is an amazing machine that can do anything from making an ice-cream freezer out of a wrecked Nazi plane to converting a jungle swamp into an airfield with the help of some discarded oil drums. It is, in short, a capacity for finding ways to do things that can't be done.

Technical Sergeant Otie P. Smith of Powell Station, Tennessee, has it, for example. Otie has charge of an electrical shop at his air base in Central India. His skill and imagination put four Liberator bombers back into the skies to plummet destruction on enemy targets in Burma and help stem the Jap advance into India. By all reason, those Liberators should have been grounded for weeks or months.

When Otie got the Liberators, all of them had broken cannon plugs. Those are small insulators in the generator. They have to withstand shock, high voltage, and intense heat. When a cannon plug gives out, electric current in the generator arcs and causes a short, and then Liberators just don't fly. It would take from six weeks to four months to ship plugs from the United States to this isolated base in an Indian jungle.

Otie had other business to do. A P-40 from one of General Chennault's fighter squadrons needed a rewiring job; the radio of a B-17 was on the blink; the magneto on a transport needed repairing before the cargo carrier could continue its flight over the Burma Road into China. But Otie kept thinking about those useless Liberators, and he was still thinking about them one morning when he and his assistant, Staff Sergeant Henry Hamblen, stepped to the side of a dirt road to let an Indian bullock cart pass. It was drawn by a pair of black water buffaloes.

Otie stared after the buffaloes plodding down the road.

"Come on," said Hamblen finally. "We got work to do. Anybody'd think you'd never seen one of those stinkin' cows before."

"Shut up," snapped Technical Sergeant Smith. "I got an idea. I'm going to town."

When Otie returned two hours later, he had a couple of black, curving buffalo horns. Henry was working industriously on a generator. "Been souvenir shopping, eh?" he said.

"Yup," said Otie.

In the machine shop Otie cut off a section of the horn and attached it to a lathe. He cut the piece to the exact size of one of the damaged cannon plugs. Then he drilled holes for the electric points. Back in the electric shop, he put the piece of horn in a tester and shot 220 volts of electricity into it. It stopped the charge dead. Otie looked up at Henry and grinned. "Now the acetylene torch," he said. Henry grinned; he was beginning to catch on. They played the blue-hot flame around the horn for several minutes, then dipped the horn in water.

Otie picked it up while it was still hot and began examining it. "Not even singed!" he cried. "Not a burn on it! She won't arc and she won't burn." He hit the piece of buffalo horn a hefty wallop with a hammer. "And she won't even break. She's just what we're looking for."

The four Liberator bombers took off the next morning, each carrying a piece of horn from a water buffalo in its generator. Otie P. Smith stood outside his electric shop and watched them until they disappeared over the range of mountains in the distance.

That's ingenuity.

Water buffaloes served as the inspiratio for Sergeant Smith. Beer bottles did th trick for Staff Sergeant Herman Feldma of Cleveland. Herman's job was to tes spark plugs for airplanes—a dreary occupation, but one that was vital to our Mediterranean campaigns. Day in and day ou Herman and his companions sat at benche testing plugs by hand. Three hundred wa a good day's production. But the cry fo more spark plugs became louder as th tempo of aerial activity increased. Attempt to streamline operations were only partl successful.

One day Sergeant Feldman got to dreaming of his boyhood days. His work benc became the kitchen table back home i Cleveland where he used to sit operatin a bottle-capping machine. With it he use to punch caps on the bottles of root bee his mother brewed. Now inspiration cam to him. Hey, why not? He could build machine like that, a floor model with lever operated by foot! Insert a spark plu into a socket containing an electrical contact, press down the lever, check th charge, and repeat.

A week later Herman Feldman had installed his new machine, jerry-built fron parts dug out of the salvage heap. Withi a few days the depot was turning out 1,00 plugs a day. At last reports it had turne out some 50,000 more spark plugs tha were expected for a given period.

Guts and ingenuity. Aurelio Tassone, Seabee from Milford, Massachusetts, has plenitude of both. During the invasion o Treasury Island, a Jap machine-gun nes was cutting down the New Zealand assaul troops at a serious rate when Aurelio cam along riding his bulldozer. They hadn' come to tankdozers in those days, and bulldozer was still strictly a constructio machine, not a combat engine. Apparentl nobody had told Seabee Tassone that, for with his commanding officer, Lieutenan Charles E. Turnbull, C. E. C., U. S. N. R. covering his approach, Tassone put hi dozer in low gear, raised his blade for shield, and made for the Jap nest. The huge machine rolled over the redoubt and cave it in. Then, lowering the blade, Tasso returned and buried the dozen Japs under their own breastworks.

The Seabees, or Naval Construction Battalions, rate high in the ingenuity league. They take delight in proving to the Japs and Nazis and the world in general that, given enough junk piles and only half enough time, they can whip any construction job or repair job the war has to offer. They can improvise on the trombone, as did the Seabee on the Green Islands who fashioned a mute for his instrument out of a pork-sausage can studded with automobile head gaskets; or they can repair a ship by blowing a hole in her with dynamite.

This explosive operation was performed on an LST which was lying helpless offshore near a heavily bombed South Pacific island. Its propellers were damaged. There were no tools available to remove them, and the Japs could be counted upon to fly over any hour and bomb the ship to the bottom. The Seabees suggested dynamite as a substitute for tools. The skipper was horrified, but he was reminded that the alternative was certain destruction of his ship by the Japs. With deep misgivings he watched as the Seabee divers packed dynamite around the propellers. He winced as a sharp explosion rocked the LST. But the Seabees carted the propellers triumphantly to the repair shop, and his ship sailed another day.

An offshore landing ship at Vella LaVella created a different problem. It couldn't get near enough to the beach to discharge its cargo. Jap planes were bombing and strafing the beaches, and something had to be done in a hurry. It was the spot for Herbert F. Minster, a Seabee chief yeoman from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. He figured that if some palm trees at the water's edge were properly felled they would reach to the ship's ramp—and he was right. The gap was bridged and the equipment began to roll ashore over the fallen palm trunks.

SUCH resourcefulness is the best safeguard against the unpredictable, and the unpredictable is inevitable. Wrong nuts are always turning up for the only bolts. The Seabees at Munda had constructed a hospital, but they couldn't finish it without pipe to supply the necessary drains. They might have shrugged their shoulders and waited for pipe to arrive from the States. But two Civil Engineer Corps officers saw the possibilities offered by a huge pile of used Japanese shell casings. The Seabees sawed off the ends, welded the tubes together, and installed some 2,000 feet of brass drains.

As if that hadn't been enough, they amused themselves profitably during off-duty hours by converting the chopped-off ends into attractive ash trays.

The irony of turning the Japs' own equipment against them appeals to the inventive genius of the Navy construction men. The Japs left a shell-torn concrete mixer behind in their haste to depart from a Pacific outpost. With a welding outfit and a twenty-foot length of four-inch pipe, the Seabees patched the holes. Then, when its mangled gasoline motor refused to start, they powered the machine with a belt attached to the rear wheel of one of their own trucks. With salvaged Jap cement and coral aggregate for raw materials, they were pouring out a concrete galley floor forty-eight hours after landing.

Another time the Seabees were assigned to construct a bridge before their own equipment had arrived. They powered a sawmill with a captured Jap motor and cut mahogany planks and timbers. They used sections of a destroyed Jap hangar for trusses, a Jap winch for power, and Jap trucks for hauling and grading work. When they had finished their bridge, they half expected to receive from Tokyo a bill for materials.

There is no end to such speed-up construction innovations. The Seabees have fired armor-piercing shells from an M-4 tank to make drilling holes for dynamite in blasting away a road site. They have employed airfield steel matting for seaplane ramps in order to cut construction time from three months to five days. They have speeded their lumber cut by using a mine detector to discover saw-damaging shrapnel imbedded in the wood. Once, when it was necessary to erect three thirty-two-foot tanks in a hurry, they hauled them through the main streets of a South Sea port whose telephone wires were only fifteen feet above the ground. They simply cut the wires and spliced them together again while the town slept. True, a few citizens did get some wrong numbers the next day.

Every airfield needs gasoline dumps. During the laying of a fuel line at a South Pacific base, Chief Shipfitter Kellar R. Dukes of Tacoma, Washington, found that the welders' protective masks were missing. Hot sparks are too much for unprotected men, but delay was impossible. The line had to be ready for the arrival of the oil tankers.

The Seabees fashioned masks out of plywood and built in small panes of glass backed with discarded and blackened X-ray film. First they used windshield glass, and when the buffeting of the sparks made that no longer usable, they cut replacements out of ordinary window glass. Then they begged pieces of glass from passing ships. Finally they used their hands, peeking through their fingers. They finished the job twenty-four hours before the fuel ships arrived.

BUT for sheer improvisation, there is probably no finer piece of junk in this war than the discarded oil drum. The steel drums have been welded end to end and used as drainage conduits for airfields and roads, as tall chimneys and sewer pipes. They've been cut and flattened for use as roofing on huts and buildings. They've been made into stoves and shower baths and furniture. They've been employed in Rube Goldberg washing machines for both dishes and clothes. One served as an improvised radiator for a bulldozer. At a North African base an oil drum was fashioned into a bull fiddle to round out a Seabee band. Yes, they've even been used to transport oil and gasoline.

Apparently, there are no limits to the resourcefulness of the American fighting man. He puts his ingenuity to use to produce the necessities or luxuries of war with

(*Continued on page 81*)

OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPHS

G. I.s are improvisers, but the Seabees are virtuosos—and scrap is their medium. They fight and build with it, add to their comfort with it. Shower at a Pacific base.

It's Your Move

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

Fifteen years is a long time to wait for the next move, but until tragedy broke the silence for Josh and Ned, their game could not go on

BY WALTER C. BROWN

ILLUSTRATED BY PERCY LEASON

YOU'D have to see this little backwoods town of Hillsboro with your own eyes to believe that such an old-fashioned place actually exists in this day and age. It isn't even a town, really; just a group of farms around a crossroads store.

And that crossroads store of Ned Sprockett's is like something straight out of a Currier & Ives print. It has the traditional iron-bellied wood stove. It has kerosene lamps with polished tin reflectors, and the rafters are hung with a hundred small items of stock—tea strainers and canvas mittens, roller towels, flypaper, lamp wicks, and round red wooden mousetraps. There is always a smell of apples and fresh-ground coffee and the smoky tang of hickory-cured hams.

But one of the first things I noticed in old Ned's store was that mysterious checkerboard. It stood open on an empty wooden case, back near the big-wheeled coffee mill, and from the position of the red and black markers on the squares it was evident that the players had stopped right in the middle of a game.

Then I noticed that the checkerboard was covered by a thick gray layer of dust—really thick. I began asking questions but cautiously and indirectly, for the Hillsboro men are a dour and closemouthed lot, even among themselves. For an outsider like myself, a mere summer visitor, to find out anything about local affairs was a slow and irritating process, like prying olives from a tall narrow bottle.

Eventually, though, I found out the story behind that dusty checkerboard. That interrupted game of checkers was the visible symbol of the long, silent feud between old Ned Sprockett, the storekeeper, and bushy-bearded Joshua Parkins, who had one of the farms along Amity Creek.

It seems that Ned and Josh, lifelong friends, had had a sudden falling out while engaged in their customary evening game of checkers. Finally Josh had gone stamping out of the store fighting mad, and Ned Sprockett, equally incensed, had let the checkerboard stand untouched.

"Some day Josh Parkins'll come to his right senses," Ned told his friends. "He'll come back here then and apologize, and we'll sit down peaceable and finish that game. It's Josh's move—" But Joshua Parkins never made the move.

That's the way I had the story from Seth Gedyon, the farmer with whom I was boarding.

"How long ago was that?" I asked him.

"Let me see now," Seth said slowly. "That was in high-water year—the year Amity bridge tore loose and busted into kindlin'. The spring of '29."

"You mean this feud's been going on for fifteen years?" I exclaimed. "What started it?"

"Can't say for certain," Seth replied cautiously. "They say it was an argument about some grain seed Josh'd bought from Ned, but I don't rightly know."

That was all I could find out about the feud. Of course it was still going on. Josh still came to the store, but he never exchanged a word with Ned, and he never bought anything.

It was only the mail that brought Josh into the store. Ned Sprockett was also the village postmaster, and every other evening or so Josh would come in and walk over to the wire postal cage in the front of the store. If there was any mail for him, Ned would hand it over—in silence. If there wasn't any, Ned would just shake his head.

I often passed Josh Parkins' place, an old-fashioned frame farmhouse with a stone well and petunias growing thickly along the rickety front porch. At night you could see the yellow glow of the kerosene lamp inside, and old Josh reading to himself from an enormous old Bible.

The only modern touch about the place was the blue service star displayed in the front window. That was for Jim Parkins, old Joshua's only son. Jim was with an artillery unit overseas.

And then one day a messenger boy on a bicycle came pedaling over from Amesbridge, where there was a telegraph office. He stopped at Ned's store to ask his way to the Parkins' farm. He had a telegram to deliver, and the boy knew what was in it: "We regret to inform you—"

It didn't take long for word to spread through Hillsboro, and we all wondered if this news about Jim Parkins would make any difference in the feud. With Jim gone, Josh was all alone in the world now. And Ned had been very fond of Josh's boy. Jim had made several attempts to bring the two stiff-necked old feudists together, but without success.

That evening nearly everybody in Hillsboro found occasion to drop in at Ned Sprockett's store. They all found a sudden need for some trifling purchase or other, but what they really wanted to see was if Josh would come in for his mail, and if Ned would speak to him about Jim.

Well, curiosity got the best of me, too, and I was there with the rest. We were all crowded around the store, talking in low voices. Some said they doubted Josh would show up at all, and some said it wouldn't make any difference if he did.

"Too much water's gone under the bridge," was the way they put it, and talked about the night Josh's barn burned down and everybody but Ned Sprockett turned out for the bucket brigade that passed pails of water from the well to save the Parkins' farmhouse from flying sparks.

And there was the time Ned's team foundered in a deep snowdrift, and Josh came riding by and went right on past without helping him. Ned had caught pneumonia that night, and nearly died.

Then there came a heavy step on the front porch, and all of us inside were suddenly quiet as we saw that it was Joshua Parkins.

"Evenin', Josh!" one of the men said.

"Evenin'!" Josh said, and turned aside before anybody else could say anything. He went right over to the postal cage, looking neither to left nor right, just standing there, grim and frosty-eyed.

OLD Ned shuffled into the wire cage, and every eye in the store was watching him. Would he say something to Josh—say that he was sorry about Jim?

Well, Ned Sprockett did break his long silence, but what he said to Joshua Parkins wasn't at all what we expected.

"No mail!" he said in his harsh nasal tone, and a kind of whispering sigh went all through the room. In life, Jim Parkins had tried to reconcile these two. Now Jim was dead, and even that couldn't do it.

Josh was turning away, wooden-faced, big gnarled hands curled into fists, when old Ned Sprockett's sharp beak of a nose gave a sudden twitch and he pushed at his straw sleeve guards.

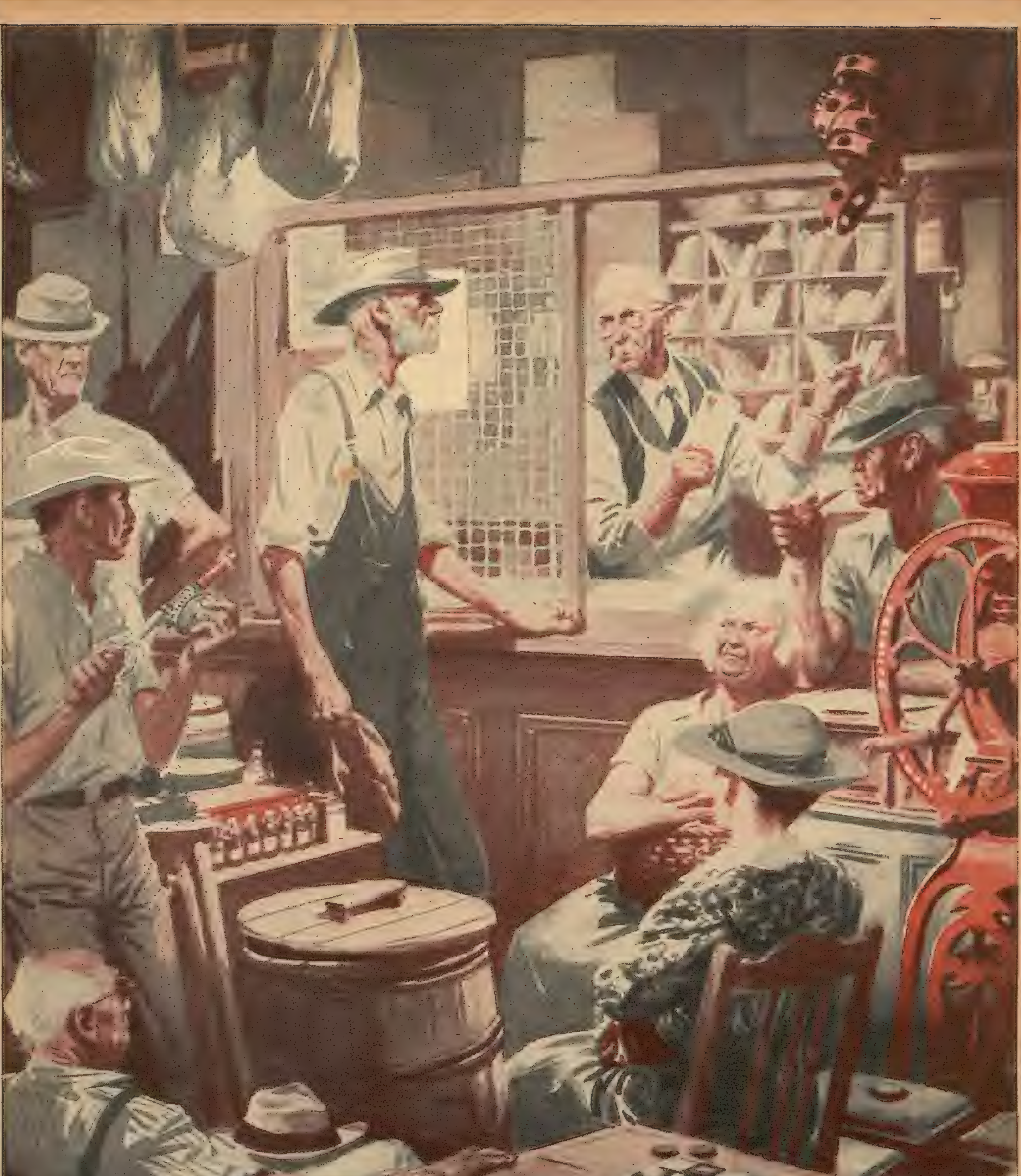
"Like to finish that game o' checkers, Josh?"

You could have heard a pin drop in that crowded store as every eye swung from Ned Sprockett's face to Josh Parkins'.

Josh's frosty gray eyes stared straight past Ned, staring steadily at the yellowed notices tacked to the back of the cage. Then his big fists unclenched and his eyes came back to Ned's face.

"Don't mind if I do," he said slowly.

THE END

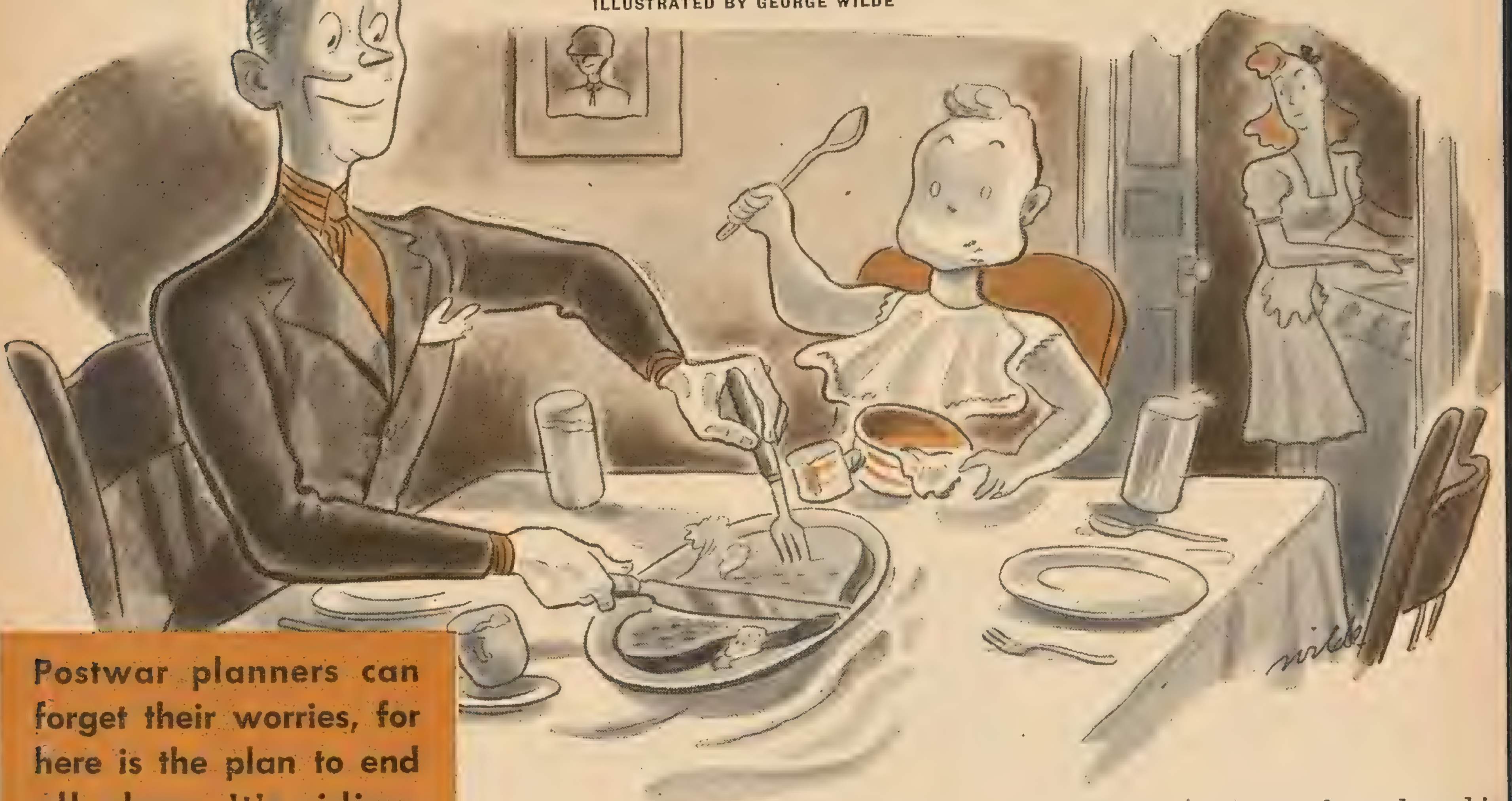


"Old Ned's sharp nose gave a sudden twitch and he said: "Like to finish that game o' checkers?"

WHAT POSTWAR PROBLEM?

BY SAMUEL W. TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE WILDE



G. I.s must be re-educated in civilian talk—"red lead" is catsup; "battery acid," tea.

Postwar planners can forget their worries, for here is the plan to end all plans. It's ridiculously simple—also simply ridiculous

FROM the sound of most postwar plans, the prospect of Johnnie marching home again is viewed with practically the same apprehension as the eventuality of his not coming back at all. What about unemployment? What about the slump? What about the future?

Well, *what* about them? The trouble with most of these plans is that they are made by the wrong people. They are concocted by economists and politicians and statesmen and scholars—as well as, apparently, everybody else who can put a pen to paper or utter a sound above a whisper. Though I have heard, from sources generally considered reliable, that there is a man in Southern California who frankly admits he doesn't know what to do about the postwar world.

Who, then, *should* make the plans? Obviously, the men who now are shaping the course of world history. Army men, in other words. The Army could very easily settle postwar world problems as simply and efficiently as it runs the best fighting machine in the world.

When a man is inducted into the Army from civilian life, the Army realizes he must be oriented. So he is put through a thirteen-week course of basic training. At the end of that time he knows what the Army is, and his place in it. He'd *better!*

Well, why should the soldier at the end of the war be thrown back into civilian life with no preliminaries? A G. I. would be lost. Johnnie wouldn't fit in at all. If the Army were to run the postwar world, Johnnie would be given a civilian basic.

The first couple of weeks would be devoted to the sense of humor, which is very different in the Army from out of it. Corporals of the instruction group would recite hoary jokes. Then sergeants. Finally, officers would utter wheezes so threadbare that the radio had stopped trying to revamp them. If the civilian rookie cracked not the slightest smile when even a general said, "Who was that lady I saw you with last night?" that phase of basic would be complete. The civilian rookie would once more understand that what is said, rather than who says it, constitutes wit, humor, and repartee.

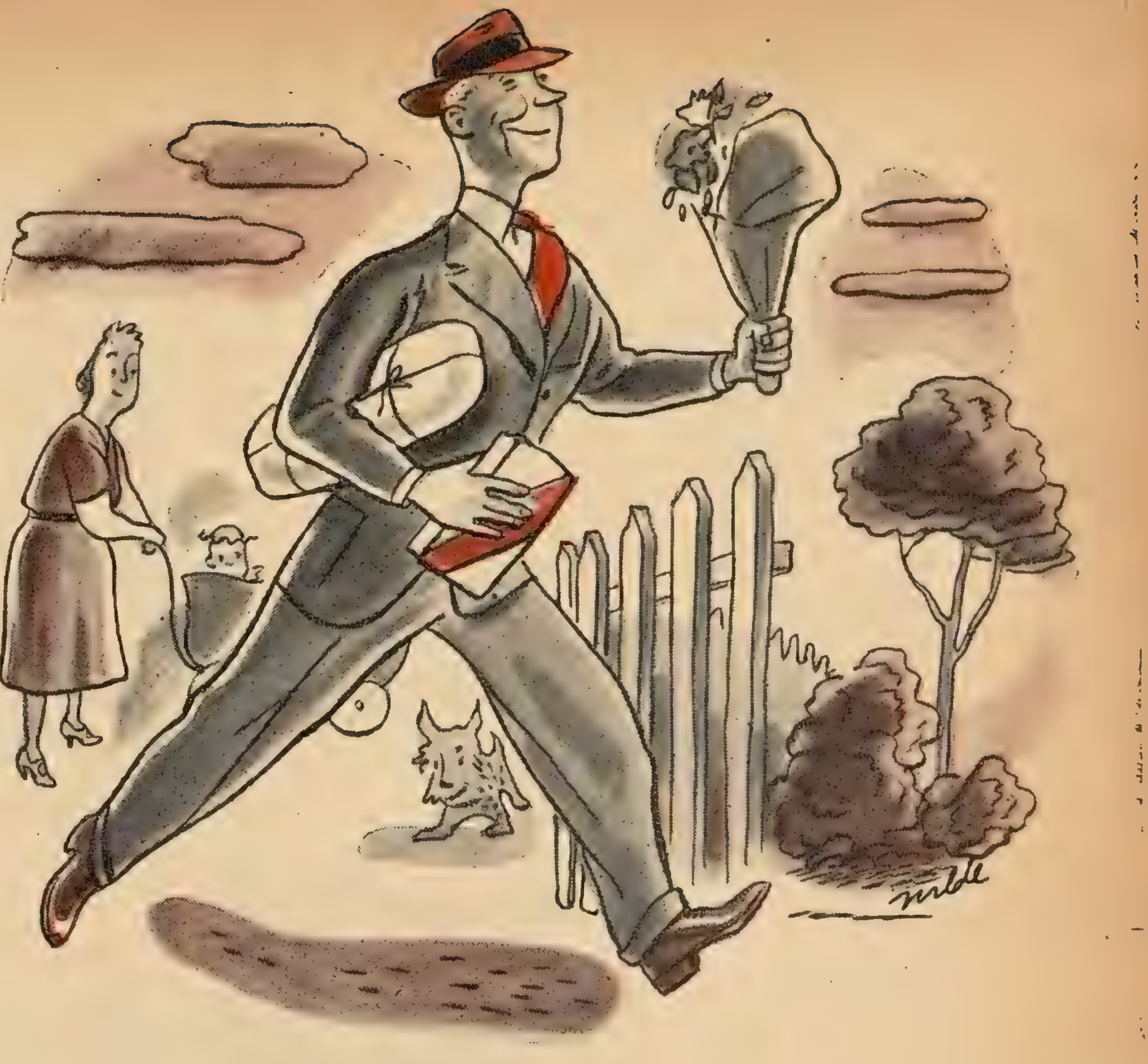
Then there is the considerable problem of sex. The Army is run on the premise that there is one sex. It would be a dangerous shock for a civilian rookie to be flung without preparation into a world where there are two. WACs, it may be stated parenthetically, are apparently considered a subdivision of the one sex, or possibly as being of neuter gender.

It is true that most single G. I.s have considerably resisted the Army's viewpoint on this subject. Love, to coin a phrase, will find a way. But should the married man be turned loose into this new world without preparatory orientation? After all, he has been away for months or years. His wife, to him, has become merely a reproduced signature at the bottom of a V-mail sheet. On his return he can't just walk through the old gate, shake off the dog that takes a nip at the stranger's leg, enter, and with a fond leer scare the wits half out of an innocent child who doesn't know the guy from the ice man (we hope), kiss a girl he hasn't so much as said hello to for, lo, these many moons, snap on the radio, take off his shoes, pick up the paper, and demand in a loud voice to be told when in hell supper is going to be ready. Not at all.

Civilian basic will take care of that. The course will include a refresher in courtship, and in making friends with strange dogs and babies. Johnnie will learn to walk through the gate with a T-bone steak in one hand, a bouquet of roses in the other, and a rattle in his pocket. Instead of trying to take his home and fireside by storm, he will woo and win. He will also be taught again to strike his forehead in consternation and utter a soul-shaken shriek at the bare mention of a dress or a pair of silk stockings, and to let no faintest sign of mirth cross his features at the sudden and startling apparition of something new in the way of women's headgear. He will learn to make decisions about what he would fancy for lunch or dinner, and when he might desire to arise in the morning. It will be impressed upon him that he now can walk out the front gate of an evening instead of slipping through a hole in the back fence, and that when he gets back is his wife's business. After a suitable period of adjustment, he will be able to fit into the old groove.

The civilian basic will, of course, in the case of former sergeants, be extended an extra two weeks for a special course in using the normal speaking voice. Medical aid will be available for ailments caused by sudden disuse of overdeveloped vocal cords. Sergeants will also spend two hours a day learning how to pronounce the peculiar civilian word "please."

The primary purpose of civilian basic is, of course, a reappraisal of values. Th



Before discharge the Army would give Johnny civilian basic training for home life.

rookie will learn that a dentist looks for a tooth to treat and fill today and pull later, instead of pulling the tooth and then looking at it. A doctor is a person anxious to find something wrong with him. A laundry, he will find, is a place where clothing merely is washed. He no longer can expect so many interesting surprises of exchange in size, color, and item.

He will be conditioned to civilian cooking. Coffee will by degrees be brought to ordinary civilian temperature and strength. The sizes of the lumps in mashed potatoes and oatmeal will be reduced gradually. Egg powder will be laced with fresh eggs bit by bit, and the same will hold true with milk. Every effort would be made to keep the adjustment from being too sudden a shock.

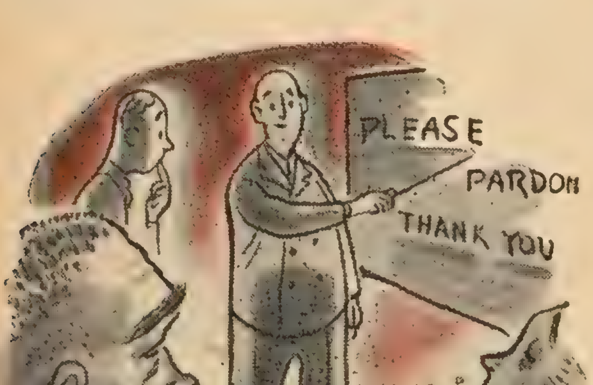
Along with this would be a re-education in nomenclature. Rookies would practice using the term "catsup" for "red lead," "stew" for "grease balls," "tea" for "battery acid," "creamed salmon on toast" for "slop on a shingle," "salad" for "rabbit food" or "horse fodder," "toast" for "dog biscuits," and other civilian terms for Army vernacular of a vivid but unprintable nature.

Instead of "And they say there's a rubber shortage!" the rookie will be taught to say, "The meat is marvelous, honeybunch; too bad you didn't have time to cook it just a couple of minutes longer."

There will be a refresher in recognition and identification of colors and fabrics. It will be explained that ties may be red or green instead of olive drab, or even red *and* green, and so on with other items of clothing.

THOROUGHLY prepared for his new life, Johnnie goes home. He will, of course, have been instructed in the correct pattern for putting rocks in his bed, taking them out one each day until a mattress gradually doesn't bother him. As a further aid to sleep, he will upon going to bed tune in on a special radio program that will in the middle of the night simulate the slamming of doors, loud voices of men coming in off pass, shoes thudding on the floor from upper bunks, trucks thundering past, and, toward morning, the CQ waking the KPs. The program will be tuned fainter and fainter over a period of weeks until the adjustment is complete.

Next, what about a job? He was guaranteed a job by his old boss. "Yes, sir, Johnnie, your old lathe will be here waiting for you when you get back." But his old boss has run out of war contracts, has gone out of business, sold the lathe, and is, in fact, looking for work himself. What to do?



Sergeants will be required to learn how to pronounce the word "please."

The Army already has an exceedingly efficient system for relieving unemployment. This system is so fool-proof that no matter how many men are in the Army, more are always needed to do what has to be done.

The system would be transferred intact to civilian life. The newly made civilian will simply walk into a Relocation Center. There he will be interviewed by experts, asked about his previous training, experience, hobbies and aptitudes. He will be given various tests. The data will be put on a large yellow card which has holes punched into it to correspond with the information it contains. A machine can sort these cards in an uncanny manner. Say our rookie has been a chemist. He will, of course, automatically be classified as a typist. If a man has been a typist, he will be assigned to common labor. If a laborer, he will be sent to school to learn chemistry.

There is rarely a mistake in the efficiency of this system. Men constantly will be going to school to learn new things. Upon graduation their classification changes, and so they automatically are put into some other vocation, or sent to school again to learn something else. The big problem, then, will not be unemployment, but to find enough men.

Johnnie is home, then, adjusted and with a job. But are we to let the old evils of the past era arise again? Perish the thought! We must grapple with broad and elementary problems in this postwar plan. The very American System must be examined.

Everyone will agree that while the American System is the best in the world, it isn't perfect. It is wasteful and extravagant. Take the average American home. Has the head of the house ever sat down and figured out just exactly everything he will ever need, as long as he lives? No. But the Army does just that. It figures out a Table of Equipment for every unit, with a couple of Circulars for expendable items. No Army unit could possibly desire any equipment not listed in its T/E—or, on the other hand, be able by any stretch of the imagination to exist without each and every item listed thereon. Why not a T/E for the American household?

A home operated under a T/E would have no attic and/or basement cluttered with old bedsprings, beer-cappers, broken lawnmowers, dress forms, and such like. It would have nothing except what was authorized.

Let us hasten to add that we are not trying either to undermine the profit motive or to suggest regimentation. We merely are seeking Army efficiency.

THERE would be a different T/E for each type and size of family and each income group. By payment of a flat sum, either in a lump or in installments, the householder would get replacement on his authorized allowances through a salvage system similar to the Army's. With everybody working, everybody getting just what he was supposed to have and no more, and replacement being practically automatic, there would of course be no poverty, no hoarding, and no shortages. As soon as a man found his suit frayed at the cuffs, he would draw a new one. If he broke a leg off a chair, he'd take it to salvage with a certificate saying it was consumed through fair wear and tear in the family service, and tote home another.

The boon to domestic happiness under this system would be incalculable. No more would there be arguments about a fur coat for the little woman. Your civilian

(*Continued on page 56*)

AIR BATTLE FOR SAIPAN

BY MORRIS MARKEY

We pummeled the Japanese armada by air in the Battle of the Eastern Philippines, but did we muff a chance to wipe it out in a gun-to-gun battle of warships?

PART TWO—CONCLUSION

Aboard an aicraft carrier, West of the Marianas.

ON June 20, some hundreds of miles west of the Marianas, the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet inflicted serious damage upon a considerable formation of the Japanese fleet in the Battle of the Eastern Philippines. We suffered almost negligible losses in the process. These extremely important facts may be brushed aside too quickly in the arguments and disputations which this action is certain to produce, for there will be men who will insist that we had at least something of a chance to destroy *all* the enemy vessels which were abroad that day—and thus do injury to the enemy which he could never repair.

Should we have given all-out pursuit to the retreating Japanese, and forced a gun-to-gun battle of ships somewhere east of Formosa? *Could* it have been done? Did we, in the face of an extraordinary and unexpected situation, fumble a golden opportunity?

These questions must be answered by the facts, rather than by the feelings of disappointment which ran through the wardrooms of our ship—and perhaps through the dinner-table conversations back there at home. I was with the fleet during those critical days, and I have set down as carefully as possible the procession of events.

During the first week of June the fleet, by far the most powerful in history, had moved westward from its forward base in the Marshall Islands. Its purpose was to support and protect the landing of infantry troops in the Marianas. This was the most ambitious and dangerous offensive operation we had yet undertaken in the Pacific. The Marianas are large islands, lying less than 1,500 miles from Tokyo. It would be simple to extend existing runways on the airfields to twice their present length, and it would be possible to send our heaviest bombers on regular daily runs to accomplish the demolition of Japanese cities, Japanese industry and supply.

Strong and determined resistance by the Japanese garrisons and aviation was inevitable. The only air support which could be given our assault forces must come from the decks of our carriers, for there were no American land bases within striking distance. The admiral in command of the amphibious operations spoke with the greatest emphasis when he told us that the prime function of the fleet in this undertaking was to support the landing of infantry, regardless of other considerations. Indeed, it was the basic doctrine implicit in the Operations Plan.

Likewise, in less formal conferences we gathered that the emergence of the Japanese fleet from its seclusion was regarded as "possible—always possible. That is why we move in such strength. But it is not probable."

There was every reasonable justification for this point of view. The Navy's last glimpse of the Japanese fleet, or any important vessels of it, had been on October 26, 1942, at the battle of Santa Cruz. For months, then, it had remained hidden in the South China Sea. Only two things could bring it out now: the determination to risk everything in a last-ditch defense of the Marianas, or a conviction that it could really match fleets with us and do us grave damage. But neither of these things seemed likely to move the Japs, for we assumed that their Intelligence, always good, had informed them of our tremendous strength.

OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOS

The Jap fleet is sighted and our planes take off to hit it.

As it turned out, the Japanese must have had at least some confidence that they were in a position to hurt us very badly, if they were bold enough and clever enough.

I have already reported upon the air battle of June 19—the greatest pitched air battle of the Pacific War. We beat them severely. But their strike had been a bold one, daringly conceived and very bravely executed. The superiority of our fighting pilots in the air won for us an impressive and highly critical victory.

With that victory only minutes old, our ship steamed toward the west on the night of the 19th, every man praying that we might come up and join battle with the enemy fleet. Our command had now committed our columns to the action, even though it meant an unavoidable alteration of the original doctrine. We were leaving the embattled troops on Saipan with a working minimum of air cover and fleet support while they fought hard against a strong and determined enemy. Nearly all of our fast and important vessels were launched toward the distant Japanese fleet.

How distant? And how powerful?

Our admirals had received certain reports giving the approximate location of the enemy, but even without those reports it was possible to deduce that he was close enough to launch airplanes from his decks. And since he had carriers enough to send off upwards of 500 planes (we had destroyed 402), he also had the battleships and cruisers, destroyers and tankers without which carriers do not move into action. But the enemy was still beyond the range of the search teams which we were sending out in constant relays, feeling for the contact.

As our great train of ships sped toward the issue, we held one trump card of inestimable value. There could not be any considerable air power in the enemy's fleet. He had already spent it in his bold gamble. None of his planes that had escaped our fighters could possibly have returned to their home ships. The Japanese carrier decks must be virtually empty. Under such conditions, the enemy could only be retreating now. That was the only sensible thing for him to do. It is a mistake to think of his retirement as cowardice.

Since the Battle of Midway in June, 1942, engagements between enemy fleets had taken on an entirely new character. From Trafalgar to the Battle of Jutland, a naval battle had meant the collision of two massive floating bodies and gun duels between them. At Midway the character of the duel changed forever. It became a duel based upon the airplanes carried by the fleets, rather than upon the turret guns. To put it another way, the airplane with its bombs had become the longest-range gun of all. Both Admiral Spruance, in command of the present action, and Admiral Fletcher had said after their participation in the Midway battle: "The side which is able to strike the first blow against enemy carriers *whose planes are still on board* wins." They meant, of course, that the loser is the man who fails to launch his planes before the enemy strikes. How was it with us, then, when the enemy apparently had no planes to launch?

We went through the night of the 19th and the morning of the 20th tense, expectant and, on the whole, sleepless on our carrier. Men peered constantly ahead at the knifelike horizon, looking for dark ships they knew they could not see, for airplanes would see them first, long before we came up with them. Those with an excuse for doing so hung about the communications center, hoping to catch a whisper when the fateful word came in.

The hours went slowly.

Then, at twenty minutes of four the afternoon of the 20th, a flying lieutenant of a carrier considerably ahead of us came out of a cloud and looked down upon the sea might of Japan. He counted: four battleships, twelve cruisers, sixteen destroyers, three large aircraft carriers, five medium aircraft carriers, five fast fleet oil tankers, and certain barges and vessels of the train.

They were not moving swiftly over the sea. Indeed, they had pulled up to refuel, and at least two of the combat vessels were taking on oil from the tankers. At that moment the Japanese fleet was in latitude 134 degrees 37 minutes east and longitude 15 degrees 38 minutes north—several hundred miles from our own position.

The lieutenant, circling to make sure of his count, was spotted by the enemy. Some antiaircraft fire was thrown at him from the decks. He ducked back into his cloud to report his discovery by wireless, and he added the observation that no airplanes were visible on the decks of the enemy carriers.

Minutes later, the carriers of our fleet launched fighters and bombers and torpedo planes in great strength.

It is important here to consider certain points:

(1) The direction of our pursuit was down wind—that is, with the wind following our ships. The carriers must turn east into the wind to launch their planes. In other words, to get our planes into the air, all of our ships had to turn backward toward Saipan and run at high speed for considerable time before the planes were air borne.

(2) The planes which flew off to the attack, even from the carriers at the very head of our column, were undertaking a mission at the extreme limit of their flying endurance. Their gas supply would take them to the enemy, give them a brief time over the target, and then barely bring them back to their home decks. The planes from carriers farther back in the column naturally had even farther to fly.

(3) The sun would set at 6.39. Returning planes would have to land in gathering darkness.

(4) But if our fleet put on full speed, we might close the interval between ourselves and the enemy by at least a few miles, thus shortening the flight of our returning pilots. Full speed ahead was ordered.

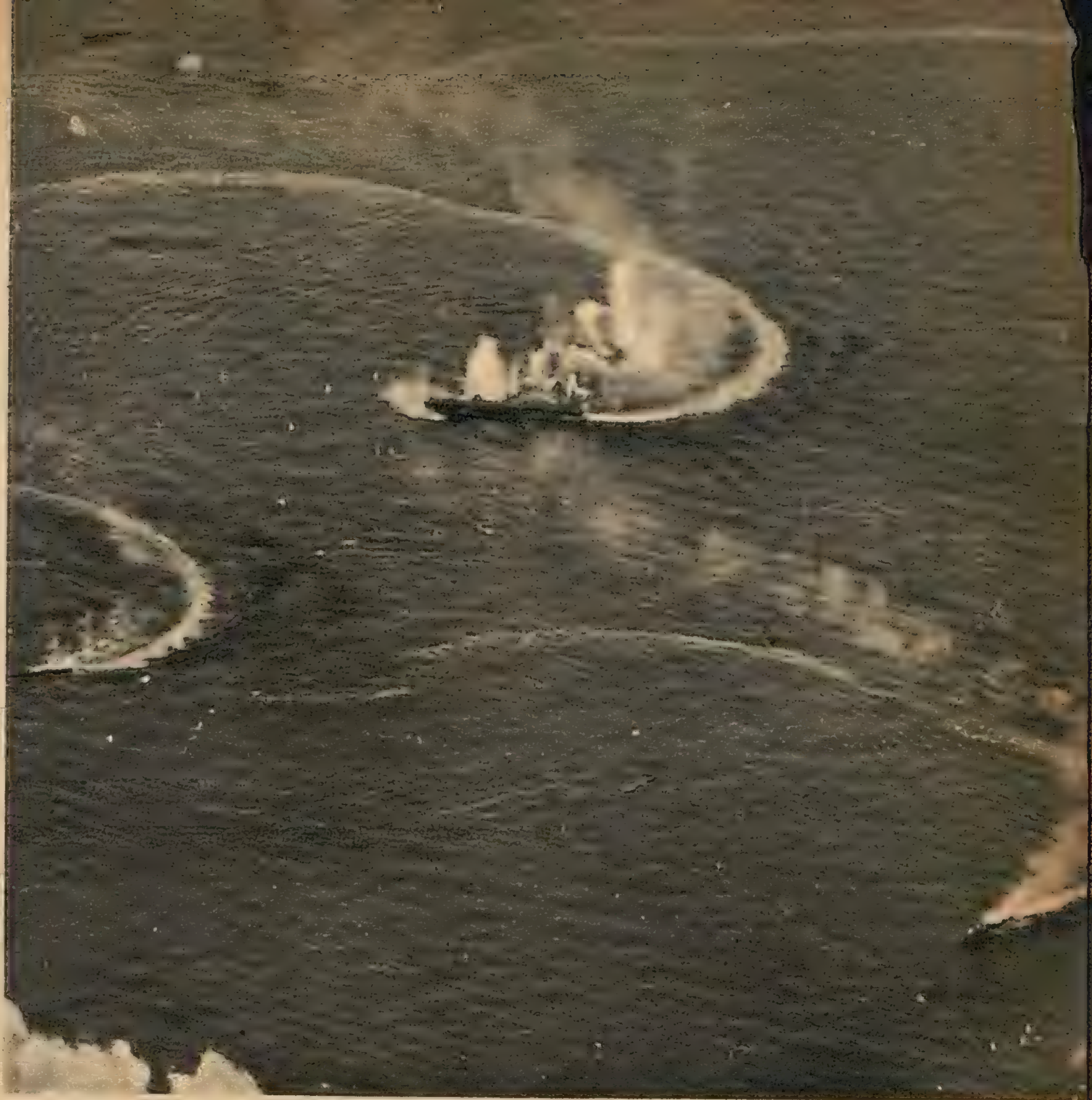
THE pilots who were in that momentous battle had no trouble finding the enemy fleet and picking their targets. The fighters swept in to strafe the gun galleries. The bombers and torpedo planes loosed their deadly cargoes. The A-A guns of the enemy ships poured red streams of tracer bullets upward. But from all the carriers of the enemy fleet, only twenty-six airplanes rose up in defense. They were quickly shot down. In a few minutes, the bomb bays and machine-gun magazines of our planes were emptied and the planes were forming up for the return.

Now came the critical period of the engagement for our fliers, more critical than the moments they had spent within range of the enemy's guns. Would they be able to make it back to their home decks?

Many of them could not.

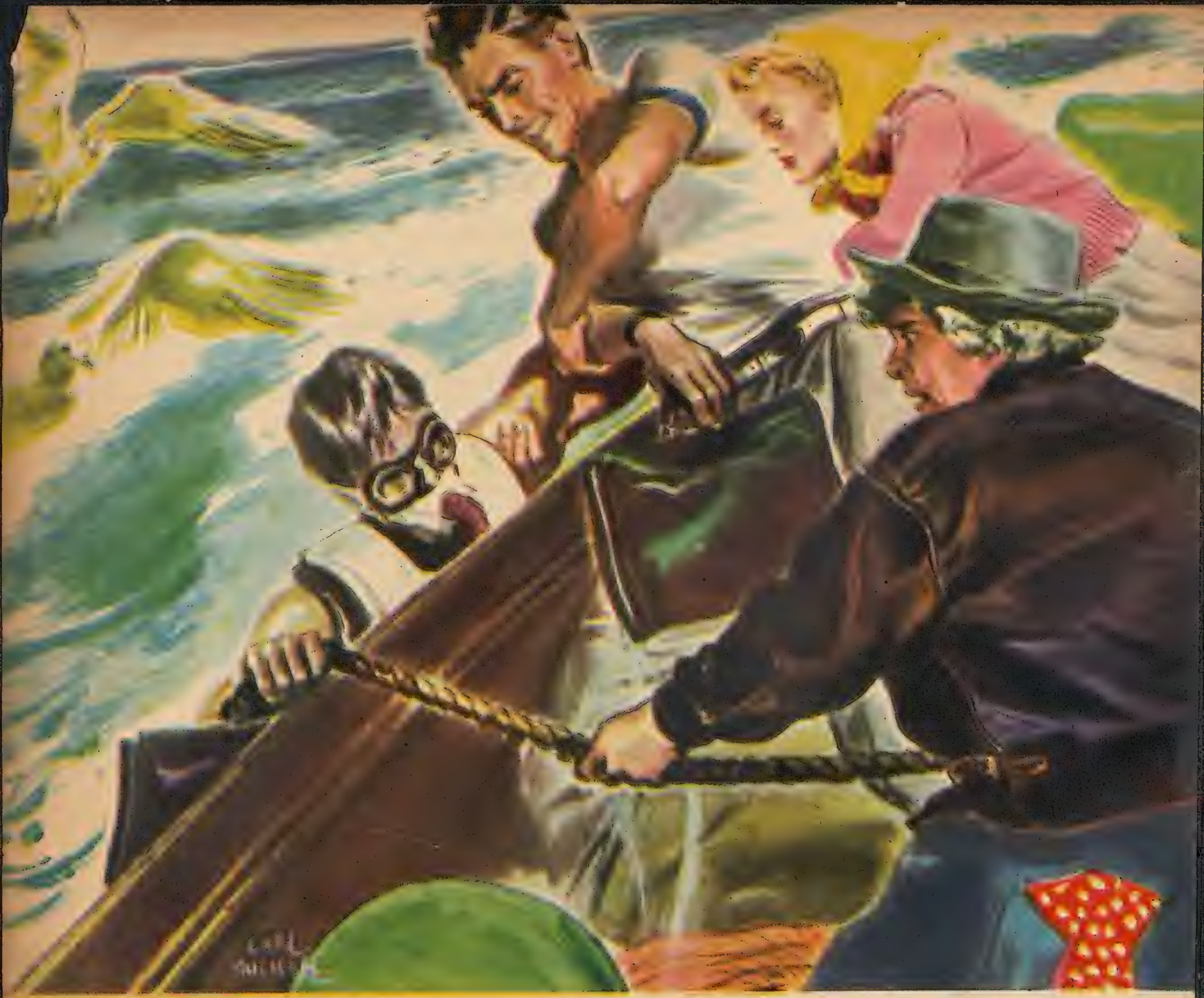
As night closed in and our carriers stood once more into the wind, offering their broad decks to the returning pilots, many came within yards of a safe landing, only to have their gas tanks suddenly go dry, their engines sputter and stop. We lost ninety-five airplanes in the engagement, and most of them were lost in the sea,

(*Continued on page 66*)



Racked by bomb hits that have set her on fire during battle in the Philippine sea, a big Jap carrier settles while her escort vessels cut frantic arcs in the water to escape. Below: A Navy pilot back on ship after carrying out order chalked on board behind him.

Get the CARRIERS



The thing broke surface as they stared, pop-eyed and paralyzed. Then Loring shouted: "Bessie! Give a hand! It's a man!"

BESSIE ARBRUSTER SNAGS A WHUPPERSNAPPER

Bessie proves there's more than fish to be caught in the sea when she hooks a Coast Guard ensign and turns an angling contest into a wholesale rescue

BY RONALD G. SERCOMBE

ILLUSTRATED BY CARL MUELLER

A MID-AFTERNOON September sun cast a mottled gold pattern on the ruffled waters of Arbruster Bay. Here and there the pattern was flecked with silver as schools of baby mackerel worked their way against the tide toward sheltered coves and channels.

Bessie Arbruster studied the scene briefly and grunted in appreciation. Then she mounted a rope ladder to the roof of the Angler's Inn and waddled toward an antiquated seaman's chest near the big brick chimney.

She fumbled for a few moments with a rusty combination lock and then straightened up, holding a large telescope. She directed the lens toward Eel Grass Bay and trained the glass on a sprinkling of bobbing green objects.

Bessie was checking on the welfare of her "fleet."

Her inspection was cut short by the rasping, high-pitched voice of Shorty, the Pekingese-faced bait cutter from Pedigo's Pier, who had mounted the ladder.

"Guy down here wants words with you, Bess."

"Who is he and wot's his business?"

"Dunno." Shorty was hesitant. "Looks like a coastguard. Rankin' man."

Bessie's big heart did a nip-up. Only yesterday she had had a run-in with the Coast Guard. Commander Crosby of the Barkentine Station was away on a special mission. The junior officers in charge neither knew nor understood Bessie. The feeling was mutual.

Clumsily Bessie lowered her bulk down the ladder. She was confronted by a pink-cheeked lad clad in immaculate gabardine whose blue eyes were frosty and manner just a shade superior.

"Miss Arbruster?" he demanded icily.

"Pipe yerself aboard," said Bessie heartily, motioning toward the inn door. "I'll break out the brew."

He ignored the invitation.

"Miss Arbruster," he said shortly, "my men stopped your power boat for routine inspection yesterday. Your fire extinguisher was not in working order. You had neglected to stow a foghorn. The glass on your port light is cracked."

"Commander Crosby'll handle the problem when he gits back, son," Bessie said. "Now run along back to school."

The young man snapped to attention.

"Regulations provide a fine which could amount to five hundred dollars or a lengthy prison sentence," he snapped. "You may expect a summons for a hearing. Nor will your insolence be forgotten."

Bessie's blood pressure mounted like the combers at the inlet.

"W-why you—" she spluttered. "Who are you, anyhow?"

"Ensign Tucker, United States Naval Reserve, at your service. On special inspection duty in this district. And I would advise you to be careful what you say."

Bessie took two long strides forward. Her angular jaw jutted and her eyes threw salt sparks.

"You—you whuppersnapper!" Bessie barked. "I was navigatin' these waters afore you was even sproutin' gills. I already've been cituated by the Navy. Now git—afore I lose my temper. Git!"

Ensign Tucker hopped into a jeep parked near the inn entrance and backed away hastily.

"You'll hear from me!" he shouted, as the jeep retreated.

"Humph!" Bessie snorted. "Feelin' his oysters, the twerp!"

SHE flounced toward the door, opening it with such gusto that it nearly came off its hinges. And there, seated on a bar stool, was Pedigo.

"Hello, fat stuff."

As he said it, Pedigo sprinkled cigar ashes on Bessie's newly swept floor.

"Cripes!" said Bessie fervently.

Bessie disliked everything about Pedigo. She studied the floor where his boots had tracked in sand.

"Wonder ye wouldn't take off yer boots every coupla months," she commented bitingly. "Ye're liable to git barnacles on yer toes."

"Hate to walk in here in my bare feet," Pedigo rejoined calmly. "Probably git tetanus 'r athletic foot."

"Y' gotta be human to get them things," Bessie snapped. "Now scram, worm. I got headaches enough."

Pedigo chuckled.

"So I hear," he said smoothly. "It's been a bad year, what with all the restrictions. But I'm allus ready to help out a neighbor in distress. Five hundred bucks when you want it. At the nominal seven-per-cent interest of course."

Bessie's chins quivered.

"Git," she warned, "afore I holystone yer dead pan."

Pedigo grinned sarcastically.

"Tourists ain't the suckers they used to be, are they?"

"You ought to know." Bessie smacked the bar with a big palm. "At any rate, they git a run fer their money here. They don't stand on a namby-pamby pier and fish where garbage has been tossed to bring the sharks in. My customers catch eatin' fish."

It was Pedigo's turn to bristle.

"My customers got seven hunnerd pounds o' eatin' fish between sunup and eel time last Sunday," he said emphatically.

"Pshaw!" Bessie did some rapid mental calculating and multiplied the results by three. "Mine got purty near a thousand pounds o' croaker, weakies, kingies, and flounder. An' a fifty-pound drum."

"You lie like Pappy Arbruster used to," Pedigo said.

Bessie's eyes roved to Pedigo's fingers and riveted on a diamond ring that she had secretly long admired.

"What's that hunk o' glass worth?" she asked casually.

Pedigo studied it affectionately.

"Better'n a thousan' bucks," he said.

"That means about three hunnerd," said Bessie. "I like that ring. Hate to see it wasted on a crab claw."

Pedigo's mind was working fast, a habit formed in his rumrunning days. A gleam of mercenary interest shone in his eyes.

"The ring against the Lark," he suggested. "We'll take next Sunday's catch."

"Go dunk yerself. With fittin's, the Lark's easy worth fifteen hunnerd an' you know it."

The Lark was Bessie's twenty-four-foot cabin cruiser, her pride and joy, and veteran of many an adventure.

"All right. I'll toss in my station wagon. Worth five hunnerd if it's worth a cent."

Bessie hesitated.

"You don't have the bettin' guts yer pappy had. S'prises me."

"Ye're on, worm," Bessie snapped. "Yer customers' haul agin mine. Sunup to eel time next Sunday. I'll git Doc Harrison to weigh in yer fish."

"Shorty'll check on yourn," said Pedigo amiably. "Anything that comes out o' the ocean counts. Anything that's alive. An' that includes shark an' stingaree an' toadfish an' sea robins. Blowfish, too, an' ling. Your customers git plenty of that garbage too."

"All right," Bessie agreed hesitantly. "Anything that's alive."

"So long, fat stuff," waved Pedigo. "I'll be tootin' round to see you in the Lark."

As the screen door slammed, Bessie hauled a huge silver watch from her pocket, opened it and affectionately studied a studio minature of Pappy Arbruster.

"Pappy," she murmured, "why can't I keep my big mouth shut? You gotta help me out."

And somewhere off Pedigo's Pier in his ten-fathom grave—the result of an extra big night of relaxation and a bet—Pappy may have turned over and his faded blue eyes must have twinkled.

Between beers he would have said, "Go to it, Toots! Strip the riggin' off'n him."

ASIDE from a few taxicabs and dilapidated jitneys, the white-lined asphalt streets of Atlantic City were virtually deserted before dawn when Pedigo and Shorty pulled up in front of Bloom's Fish Market in the former's station wagon.

Shorty was whining.

"It ain't right to do this to Bessie," he said.

Pedigo cut him short.

"Who's payin' you, me or that old mud hen?" he demanded. "Button your gills."

Pedigo picked out the biggest fish he could lay his hands on—ten-pound flounders, eight-pound weakfish, three huge channel bass that must have weighed better than fifty pounds each, a beautiful striped bass, and an assorted variety of croaker.

"A big week-end you're expecting maybe in the dining room?" asked Sammy Bloom.

"Yeah," grinned Pedigo. "A big week-end."

The accumulation weighed close to four hundred pounds. Pedigo argued for a discount and won.

"We'll set an all-time record," he grinned, as he and Shorty rumbled back to Barkentine Island. "And the publicity won't hurt us a-tall a-tall."

"But how?" Shorty asked.

"Just you leave that to yer Uncle Pedigo."

"I don't think it's fair—" Shorty began whining. Pedigo cuffed his drooping left ear.

NEWS of the contest spread like sand in a windstorm. Quickly, too, it became known along the coast that it was "free day" Sunday on Pedigo's Pier, and the water front buzzed with talk that Bessie was hiring out boats gratis the same day and offering a prize of a large barrel of pale ale for the biggest catch in the bay.

The gulls still were sleepy-eyed and ruffled when the last of Bessie's fleet of forty rowboats left the docks at five o'clock Sunday morning. They churned the water behind the Lark. Bessie had accommodated one hundred sixty-eight fishermen and fisherwomen, counting those who were aboard her old power boat, the Pappy. If each boat averaged a catch of thirty pounds, Bessie figured Pedigo would be licked.

Bessie, having returned from arduous towing duties, stood on the end of her dock and studied the sky and water.

"Wind blows from the south," she chortled inharmoniously. "Blows the bait right in their mouth."

She felt unusually happy and tinglingly alive. She saw Shorty ambling lethargically toward the dock.

"Hi, you sawed-off mizzenmast," Bessie roared. "Row closer 'n' I'll break out the brew."

Shorty accepted a free beer with alacrity, but his eyes avoided Bessie's.

"What's itchin' you?" asked Bessie, puzzled. "The gulls is wakin', the birds is peepin', the sun's comin' up, tide's comin' in, an' we got a south wind."

Shorty shook his head gloomily.

"Pier's jammed," he said reluctantly. "Pedigo a'ready got two hunnerd pound o' croaker and weakies."

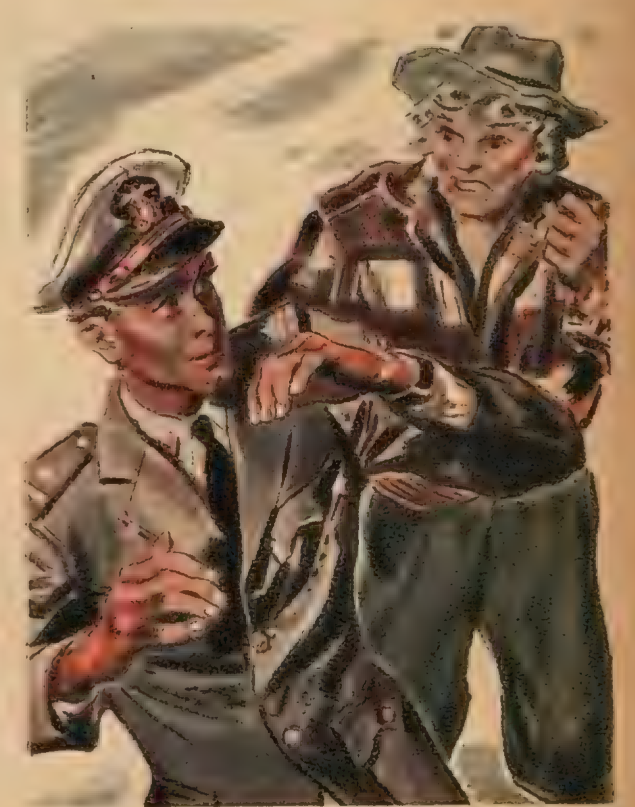
Bessie studied Shorty at close range.

"You know somepin," she said suspiciously. "You know somepin or I ain't a Arbruster. Come on. Break down or by guppy I'll dunk ye in the duck pen!"

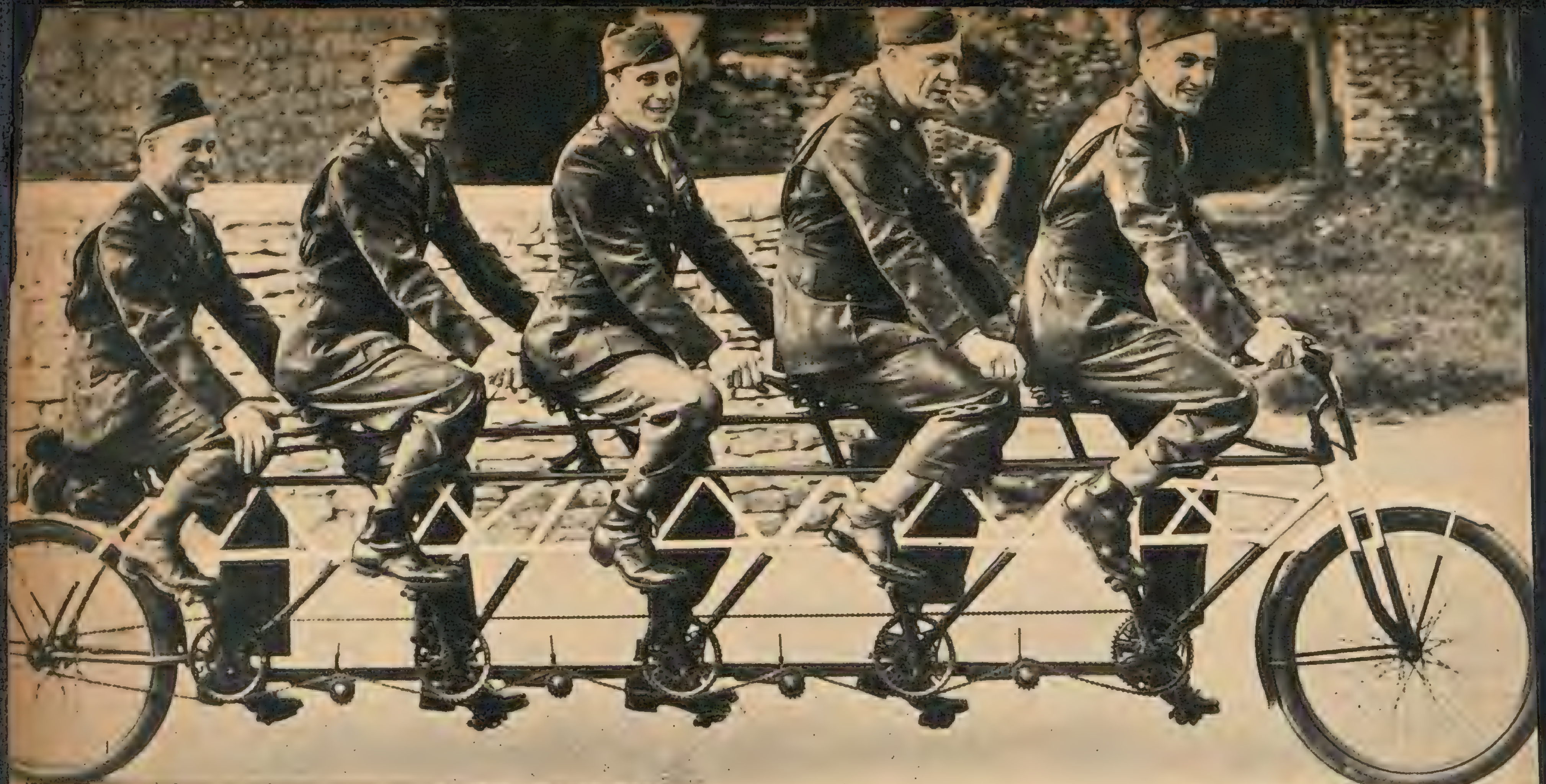
Shorty shook his head miserably.

"Is that double-crossin' sting ray puttin' sinkers in them fishes' bellies?" Bessie

(Continued on page 72)



"Whuppersnapper!" Bessie barked. "Now git afore I lose my temper."



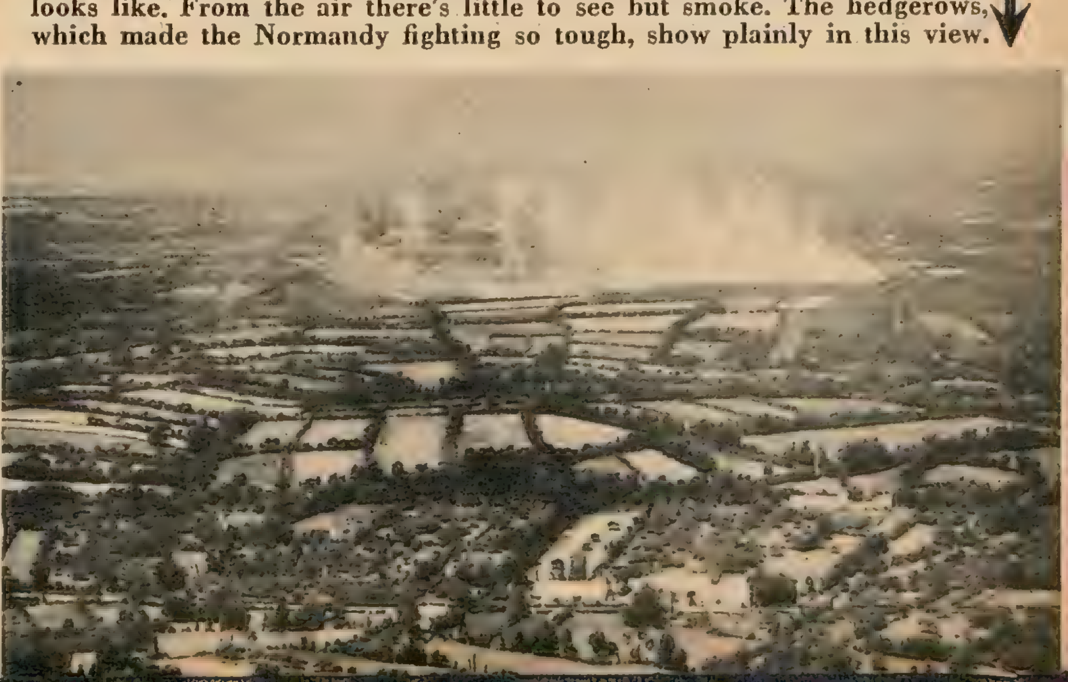
TALLYHO AND YOICKS—What a way to ride to hounds! It's our own jolly version of a five-seater velocipede, and it solves the transportation problem for Yanks at a West Country depot in England. If there are ever any empty seats, you can bet boys don't lack fair passengers. ↑

The Camera Eye

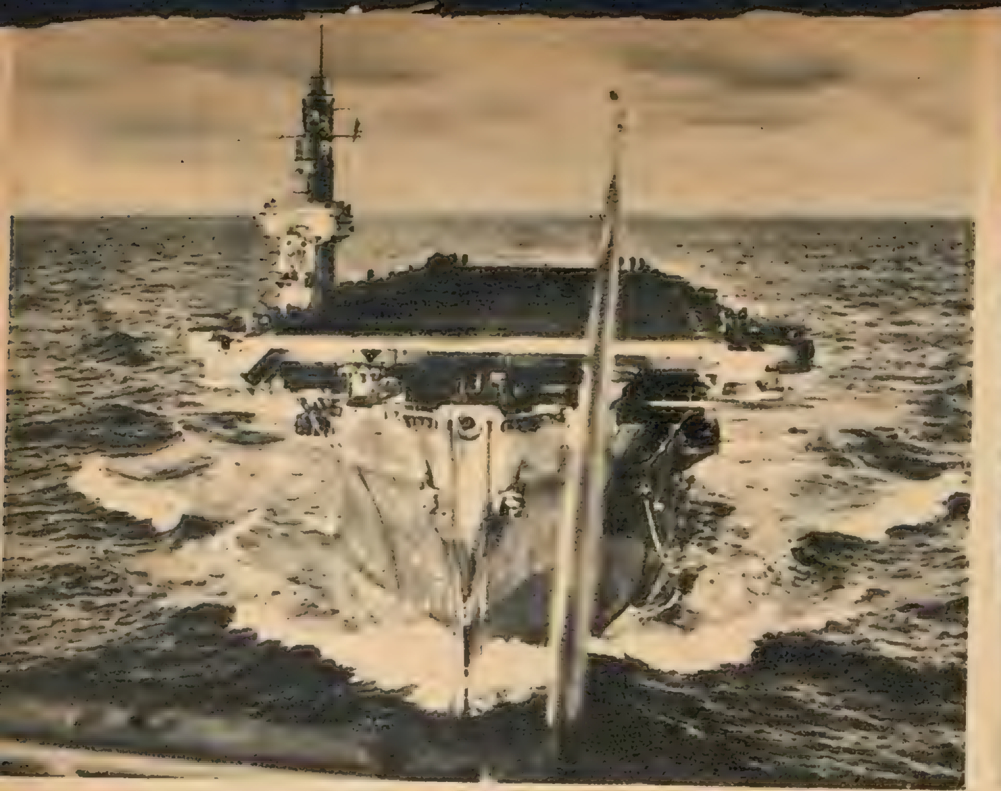
Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

LINDY HOPS—Charles A. Lindbergh visits Australia while on tour to show Liberator pilots how to fly farther on less gas. Here he chats with Lt. General George Kenney at latter's Far East Air Force Headquarters. ↑

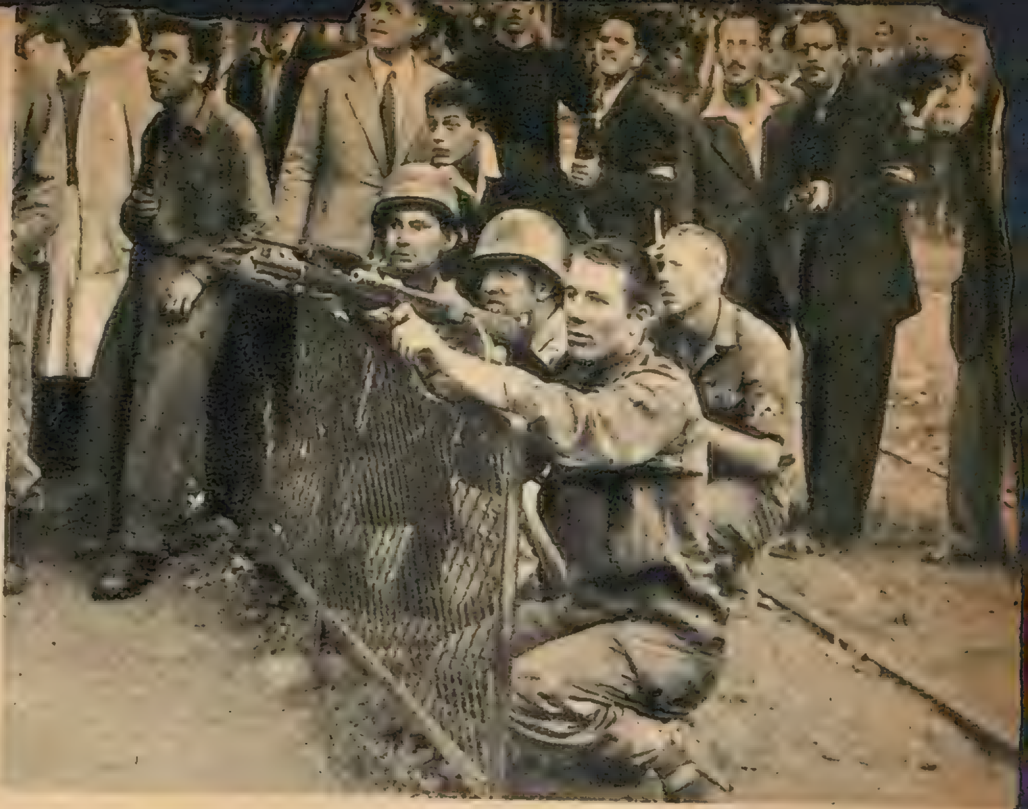
IT'S A BATTLE—For those who have never seen one, this is what a battle looks like. From the air there's little to see but smoke. The hedgerows, which made the Normandy fighting so tough, show plainly in this view. ↓



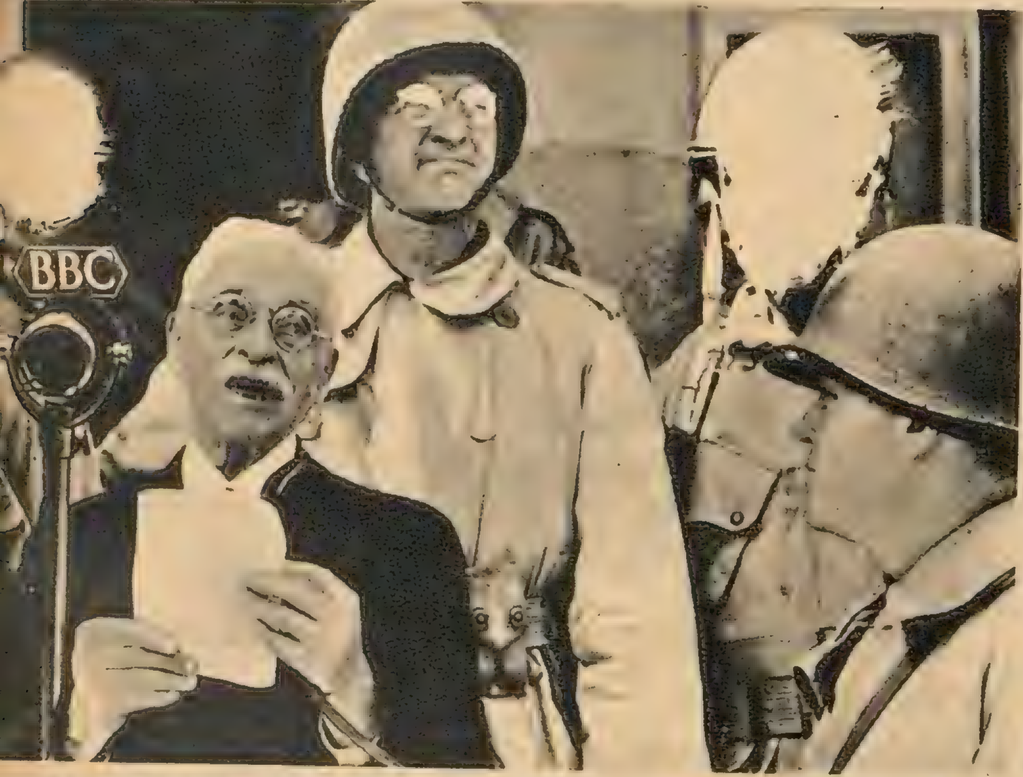
OLLYWOOD BABE—Not all movie stars' children are adopted. ie fathered his own son, Laddie, shown here sitting in en Lockhart's lap. They play in M-G-M's Son of Lassie. ↑



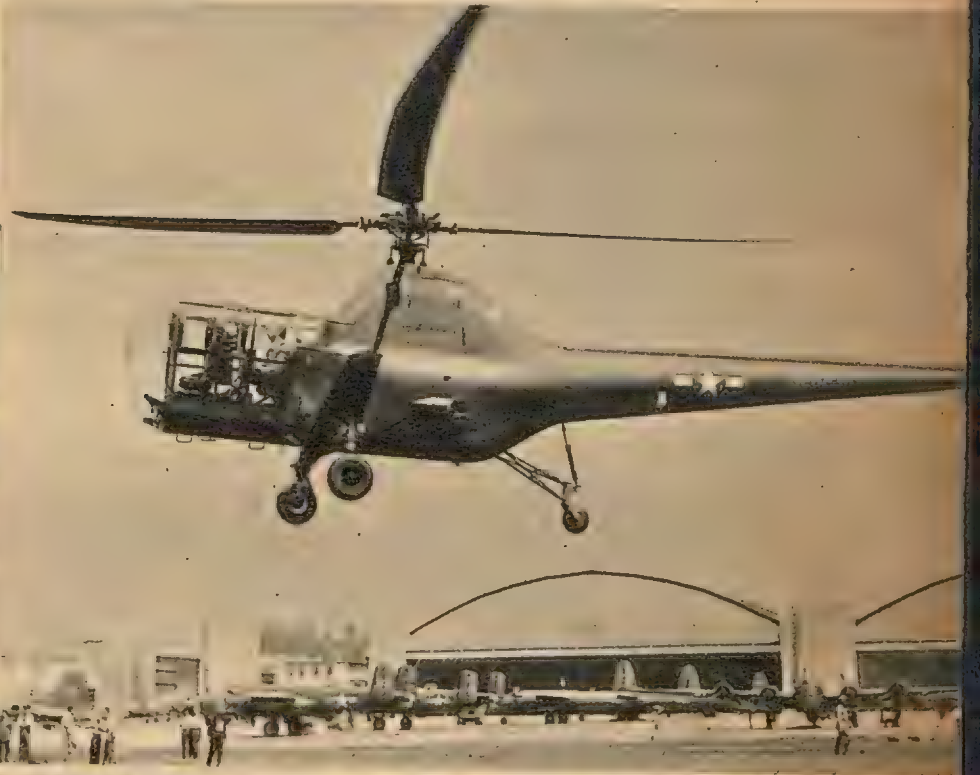
U-BOAT HUNTER—Here's how the British escort carrier, H. M. S. Chaser, looks to the rear gunner of a plane launched from her deck. She has a fine record of U-Boat sinking above the Arctic Circle. ↑



TENSE MOMENT—The battle for Rome is over, but American soldiers still deal with a hidden enemy—a die-hard Fascist potting from a window. Italian civilians look on unmindful of danger they are in from stray shots. ↑

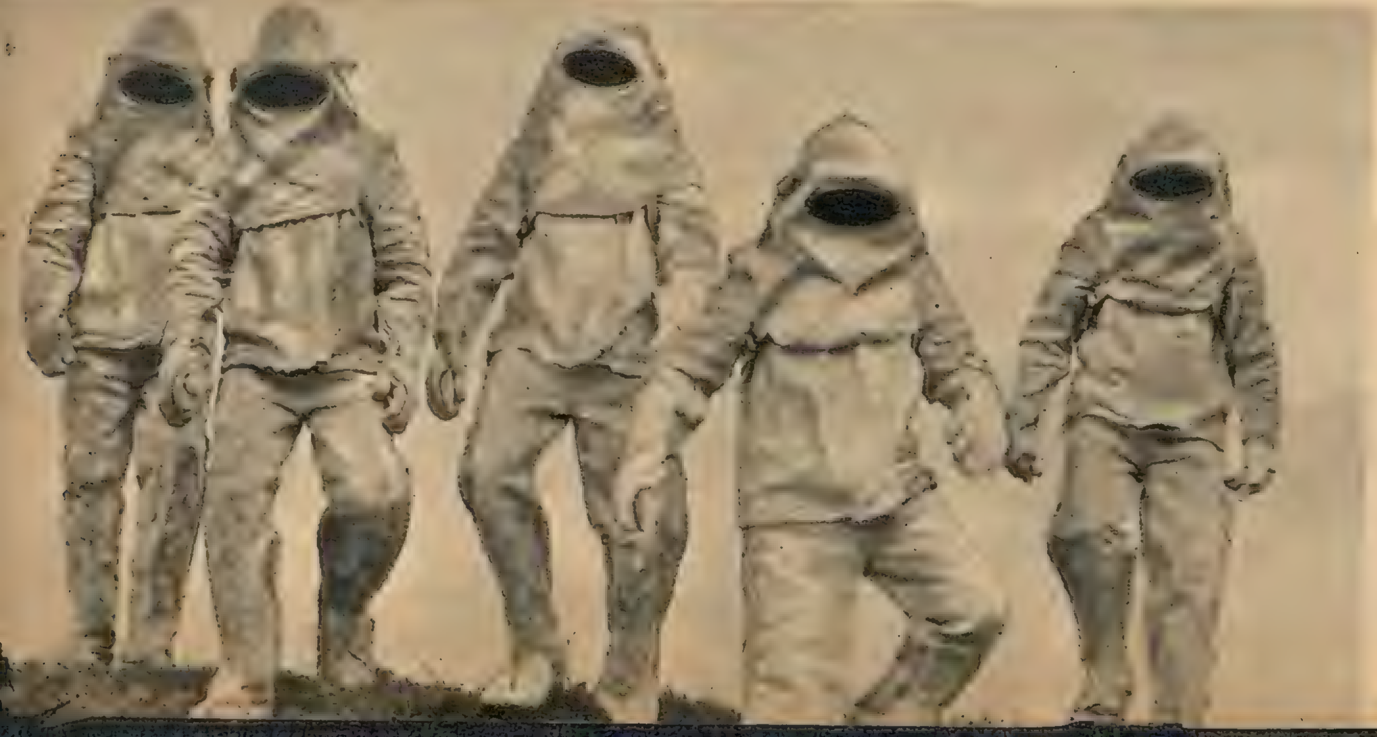


MISSING FACES—Who belong to the faces scratched out of this group gathered around the mayor of Cherbourg? The only officer we can identify is Major General J. Lawton Collins, at the right. ↑

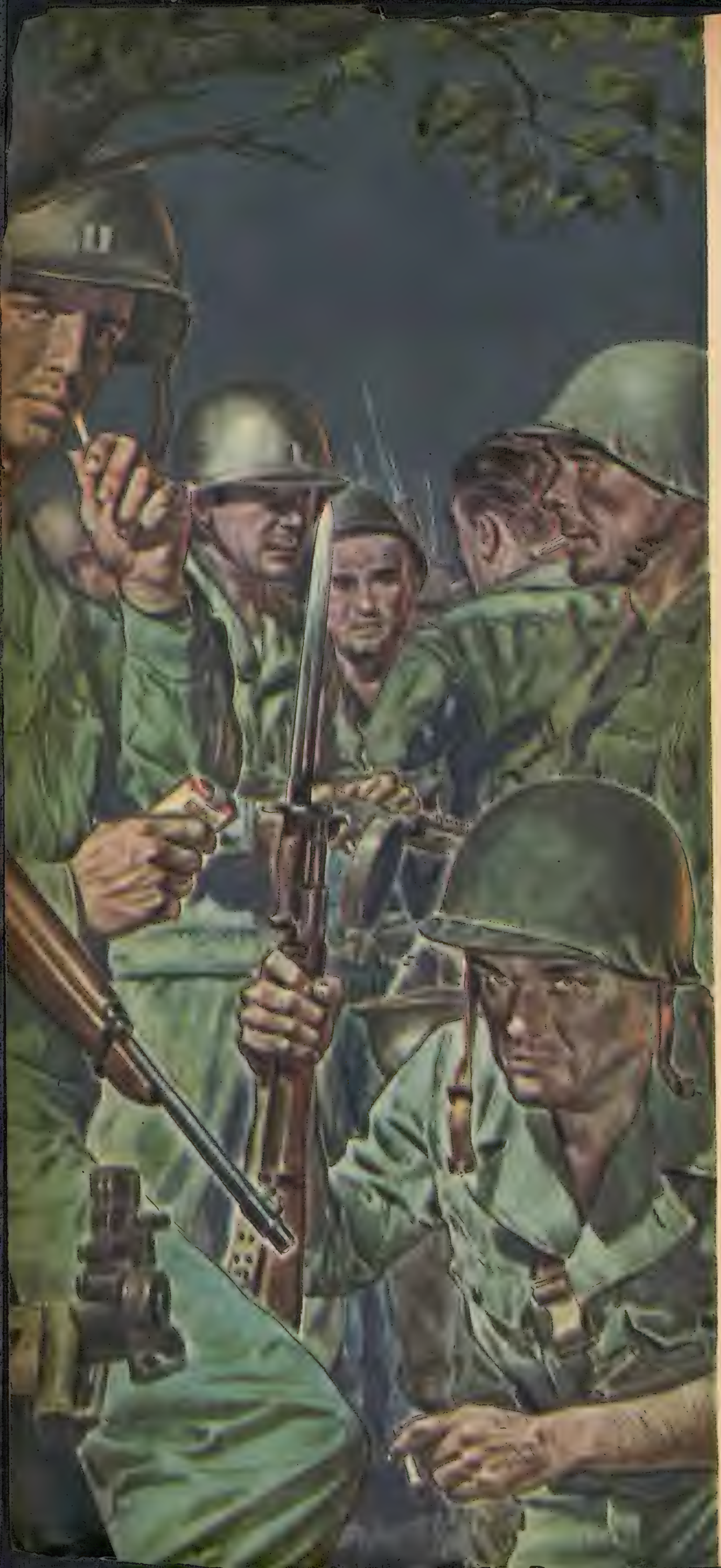


STREAMLINER—Helicopters usually look like dime-store egg beaters, but here's the Army's newest—a sleek job built by the Sikorsky Corporation—in flight at the Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. ↑

DRESSED FOR THE HEAT—Cadets at Naval air station in Atlanta dress in asbestos suits to keep cool as they learn technique of handling infernolike gasoline blazes caused by aircraft crashes. ↓



SAILOR'S RETURN—Louis DiOrio is smothered in affection as he arrives at New York's Pennsylvania Station. Welcomers are his wife, daughter, nephew, and sister—a gob's dream of homecoming! ↓



At five minutes before the hour the men were stirring a little, and I took out the last cigarette I should be smoking for a while.

GOODSPEED'S

FOR two days we had held a foothold on the north bank of the river, in a tentative, exploratory sally that came to relieve our long inaction. The forces involved were small, the issues local and minor, but Captain Goodspeed, for one, was delighted. The thing to do now, he said, was to harass the Germans all along their line, give them no rest, keep things moving. One should never surrender the initiative.

"The thing to do is to obey orders!" I said. "Don't hang on to the initiative until it lands you in a court-martial. And just how do you propose to harass the whole German line with less than a company at your disposal?"

Goodspeed took objections like that in his stride. "They don't know our strength! The very fact that we are attacking, the element of audacity, is worth a regiment."

"Not against prepared positions. Not without artillery. You are not riding with Jeb Stuart, I would remind you. This is Italy, the time is the twentieth century, and warfare is a complicated and serious business. I mention all this for your own good. Better not talk to the colonel about initiative and audacity."

"But can't you see that they're always timely, that they're worth any amount of prepared positions and numerical superiority? Now, if I were Colonel Ames—"

I knew better than to listen. Goodspeed was master of a mad, specious logic, a persuasiveness that, like his military science, relied heavily upon initiative and daring. You knew he was wrong, but before you could bring that home to him he was off on another mental foray, and you never quite caught up. It was safest not to engage him in argument at all.

When I had first known him, John Goodspeed had struck me as talkative but never prolix. He talked all the time, but such was the fertility of his invention that not one of his notions got more than a hasty outlining before he had to hurry on to the next. Talk saved him from bursting with the pressure of ideas. It was his one vice. He didn't drink or run after girls; his weakness was a restless cerebration, and to that his addiction was incurable.

It is only fair to say that Goodspeed could not help himself. He was quite without vanity, and his personal ambition was little. But he did have a consuming itch to see things happen—unscheduled things. He loved them for their own sake, not for any proposed advantage to himself. And when he was around, such things often did happen.

THERE on the north bank of that Italian river, I felt reasonably safe from anything that even Goodspeed might devise. The Germans in front of us knew their trade, and they were too strong for us to dislodge. That being established, a further stay on the north bank would be foolhardy exposure. Already we were under a steady, businesslike, unrelenting pressure, and since the colonel had sent no reinforcements across the bridge, he clearly intended to withdraw us. We should go back to the line we had already held for three weeks, and there wait for the high command to break the weary deadlock. The prospect was dispiriting but eminently reasonable. What else could be done? In

GAMBIT

BY WILLIAM A. BREYFOGLE

ILLUSTRATED BY AL SCHMIDT

Horatius at the bridge had nothing on Captain Goodspeed, who held an Italian farmhouse against overwhelming odds and gave the Nazis a bitter lesson in tactics from the classics

that situation there was no true initiative to be held or surrendered, and the element of audacity was pretty sure to be nipped in the bud. Thank heaven the colonel knew that, if Goodspeed did not.

Just as I had expected, the orders to withdraw came within the hour. This time the withdrawal was to be final, and Goodspeed was instructed, having first covered the retreat of the rest, to destroy the bridge behind him. We were renouncing all present interest in the north bank.

I was prepared to condole with Goodspeed, supposing that he would take this disappointment very much to heart. But he was always unpredictable, and instead of being depressed or rebellious, I found him sunk in profound thought, his orders in his hand but his mind very obviously otherwise engaged. When I spoke to him, he jumped.

"We'd better get a move on, hadn't we?" I said. "How long will it take you to mine the bridge? Are you listening to me?"

"Bridge?" he said vacantly, and then, to my annoyance, he laughed. "You know, I've just been reading these orders!"

"So I supposed! I hope you've taken them in."

"I was thinking— When you were a kid in school, was there a poem in the Reader about Horatius?"

"This is a fine time for reminiscences of childhood! If you don't get busy, there will be a poem about you, and it will start off, 'Here lies—'! Now, what about it? How long will you need to place your mines?"

"Oh, not very long." He was still staring at his orders, but that far-off, speculative look of his frightened me. "Twenty minutes, half an hour."

Heavily sarcastic, I said, "Don't let me hurry you!"

"Eh? No, it's all right! I was just thinking—"

"About Horatius?"

"It must have been very dramatic, eh? Those three alone at first, then just Horatius. I don't see how even his enemies would have eyes for anything else! He must have attracted all the attention."

"*You* are attracting attention, and it's damned unfavorable! If you want to play Horatius, do it on your own time, can't you? Do you understand that the colonel expects you to cover the retreat, cross the bridge yourself and blow it up behind you?"

For a moment I thought I had roused him from his abstraction. There was a farmhouse not a hundred yards to the right of the bridge, one of those Italian farmhouses with a walled courtyard and straggling outbuildings, all of stone. He pointed at it.

"That's clearly the place to hold," he said, "while the rest of you are withdrawing."

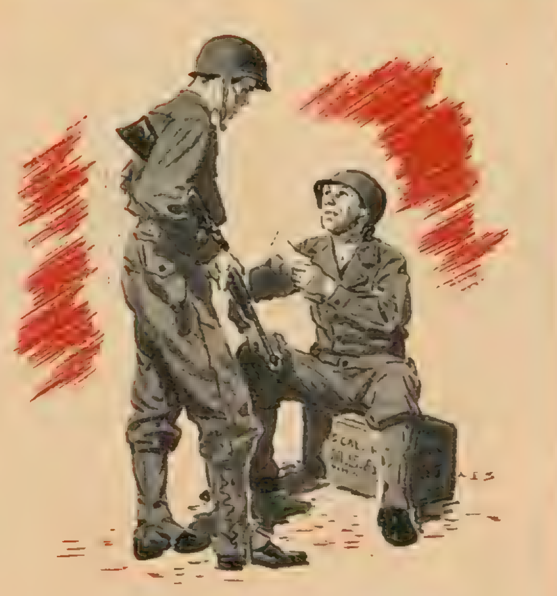
"Just the thing!" I said, to encourage him. "A few machine guns, and—"

"Heavy machine guns."

"As you please. Heavy machine guns and thirty or forty men. You can make it hot for anyone approaching the bridge."

"Fire power is of the first importance," said Goodspeed. I should have recognized that inspired gleam in his eye, but I had deluded myself into thinking that he was now ready to substitute action for speculation, that he was going to carry out his orders thoroughly and well.

"Fire power," he proclaimed, "is what you might call the stationary equivalent of mobility, and you can't have too much of it. Look! I'm off to mine the bridge. You round up all the mortars and bazookas and guns you can find and get them emplaced in that farmhouse. The withdrawal may take time, so leave me plenty of ammunition. It would be just like the Germans to exert a little pressure when they see us beginning to move, and their ardor needs a lot of restraining. Allow for that, will you? Plan for the worst, and then add twenty-five per cent for the unforeseen. The unforeseen is the giver of victories!"



"You know, I've just been reading these orders!"

"Goodspeed, when you become oracular—"

"I'm only trying to do the job well!" he pleaded, suddenly humble. "It's all implicit in the orders! The colonel tells me to cover the retreat, and that's what I intend to do. You can see for yourself that there's no scope for anything else!"

I did not then know John Goodspeed as well as I do now. Besides, we had already wasted too much time in debate, and we had to hurry. I suffered myself to be beguiled by his shrewd point that, whatever he might have liked to try, he was so placed that he could do nothing but obey orders.

He went off to prepare for the destruction of the bridge, and I began getting ready for the withdrawal, diverting our three light field guns and all lesser artillery available to the farmhouse. When we parted, he looked very cheerful.

But what should I have deduced from that? Goodspeed was always cheerful on the eve of action. I have no doubt that this quality of rising to the hard occasion was what had led Colonel Ames to choose him, rather than me, to cover our retreat. There was more to him than the rapt and enthusiastic visionary, the theorist. He had a delight in action, too, and the more vigorous the better.

The Germans left us so severely alone that we knew they must be watching. It is my observation of them in the field that the Germans do nothing on intuition. They wait to see what you have in mind before they strike, on the thoroughly Teutonic assumption that your processes of thought must be like their own. Now, the stir in our lines might have been only a shifting of forces, or it might have meant that we were going to attack, and the Germans preferred to wait, on the alert, rather than take inappropriate action. It was considerate of them. It meant that I could devote my spare attention to Goodspeed, who almost never waited.

The withdrawal across the bridge presented few complications, and the rough broken ground on the north bank screened it from immediate or complete observation. Goodspeed and his forty men, established in and around the walled farmhouse, put up a covering fire, and half the company had slipped across to the south bank before it struck the Germans that all our fire was coming from one point now, and they grew suspicious and sent out patrols. Then at once they stopped, leaving us alone, and Goodspeed glanced at his watch and nodded, pleased. "In good time for the performance!" he said with approval. "Curtain's going up!"

I had come to tell him that my part of the job was almost done and that when the last of my men had crossed, I proposed to follow them. But instead of this, I said, "What curtain's going up? What performance are you talking about?"

"Just a manner of speaking!" he assured me, still with that ominous cheerfulness. "But the Germans are on their toes, aren't they? You'd better run along, before the rush-hour traffic. See you across the river!"

"How soon?" I demanded.

"Oh, just as soon as the job here is finished!"

"No shenanigans, now! The colonel—"

"Away you go! Would I try shenanigans, when the colonel can watch every move I make? There go the last of your fellows. We'll turn on the heat a little while you scamper across. So long!"

I left and, under cover of the intenser fire, got safely across the bridge. Colonel Ames would be pleased; so far, the withdrawal had been accomplished with only a few minor casualties. I should have been pleased myself, but I wasn't. Somehow I had an idea that Goodspeed had been anxious to get rid of me.

ON the south bank a hill rose so steeply from the river that it was a marvel how the village there had ever managed to cling to its slope. Beyond the hill was open, level country, and the regimental headquarters, the depots, and the hospital had that comfortable natural rampart between them and the Germans. Characteristically, Colonel Ames was not in his headquarters but in a ruined villa, high on the hill's flank, that gave him a clear view of the bridge, Goodspeed's farmhouse, and the whole north bank of the river. I found him on a shell-pocked terrace with his binoculars at his eyes. He took them down when

(*Continued on page 52*)

Out of the belly of a TBF drops a torpedo—deadliest of naval weapons. Censor has deleted rear mechanism.

OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY KODACHROME

TIN FISH FOR TOKYO

BY RALPH WALLACE

More delicate than a watch, yet as powerful as a blockbuster! That's the torpedo, our chief weapon for punching holes in Jap ships

EARLY last November, nearly 200 planes snarled from the decks of U. S. aircraft carriers in a misty Pacific dawn. Ahead lay one of the war's most crucial missions—the smashing of a huge battle fleet assembled by the Japs at Rabaul in a last fanatical effort to hold the Solomons. If our flyers failed, the road to Tokyo might be lengthened by months or even years.

As the attacking Americans roared over the high, grim mountains guarding Rabaul's upper harbor, one of the greatest enemy concentrations of the war spread below: seventeen destroyers, a light cruiser, and six heavy cruisers. No time was wasted. In perfect co-ordination, fifty dive bombers screamed down, dropping their fat vicious eggs. Hit after hit rocked the anchored vessels as panicky crews fired wildly.

Then, swift and murderous, fifty torpedo planes raced in. The dive bombers had mauled the Jap warships. Now the stage had been set for the torpedo bombers, deadliest aerial killers of the sea. Plane after plane corkscrewed through walls of antiaircraft fire to drop its lethal missile; torpedo wakes converged from every direction. Swinging up into formation, the jubilant torpedo pilots surveyed the result—two destroyers, the light cruiser, and all six of the heavy cruisers either sunk or put out of action for months to come. Once again the Navy's tin fish, most decisive of all sea weapons, had broken the back of an enemy fleet.

It was no new story for the aerial torpedo, despite the notion that most ships are sunk by bombing. British aerial torpedoes had crippled and finally sunk the Germans' "unsinkable" Bismarck; they had virtually wiped out a large segment of the Italian navy at Taranto. On the enemy side, Japanese torpedo planes had accounted for the bulk of eight huge American battleships sunk or damaged at Pearl Harbor, and they had sent the Repulse and the Prince of Wales to the bottom. America, in turn, had saved Australia by dispersing an invading Jap armada with torpedo planes off New Guinea in the spring of 1942. At Saipan, Truk, Santa Cruz, Oran—wherever planes have been available—the aerial torpedo has dramatically influenced the course of war. And as our forces sweep closer to Tokyo and a showdown, this streamlined engine of destruction may well deliver the death blow to Japan's navy.

Any number of bombs may fail to sink a warship or merchant ship unless the bombs strike gasoline stores or powder magazines. Often their net effect is to let air in at the top of the ship. Torpedoes let water in at the bottom. Consider the two almost identical English aircraft carriers, the Illustrious and the Ark Royal. In a single day off Malta, German dive bombers plastered the Illustrious with seven direct hits by 2,000-pound bombs, yet the ship made port. One torpedo hit the Ark Royal. She sank.

This mechanical shark is the most intricate and ingenious destructive machine yet produced by military science. The torpedo steers itself, and will even swim in a curve. Actually, it is our tiniest warship, complete with an engine room, a cargo, and a robot crew. Like a warship, it is given several test runs, or shakedown cruises, before it ever joins the fleet. It weighs a ton or more, depending on the type of vessel which fires it, and carries a minimum of 600 pounds of high explosive in its warhead. It will travel under the water at any depth desired, and it will hold precisely to the course assigned to its metallic brain. And it is capable of sinking vessels ten to twenty thousand times its weight.

Geniuses of naval construction have tried hundreds of anti-torpedo devices. So-called torpedo bulges, or double hulls, in which the torpedo would theoretically explode without penetrating the ship's vitals, have been added to battlewagons. Now most capital ships rely on myriad compartments below the water line, so that if one compartment is pierced by a torpedo, others can be shut off from the inpouring torrent of water. No precaution, however, has proved wholly effective. As the Navy says: "When a torpedo hits anything, it stays hit." That is why every ship in our immense carrier fleet carries a full quota of torpedo bombers.

Recently I talked with Lieutenant Commander Robert F. Farrington, a wiry, dynamic little U. S. squadron leader who holds the Navy Cross and Gold Star for "extraordinary heroism." He has been dropping tin fish into Jap ships from the time of Pearl Harbor, and has scored hits on every type of enemy ship from tanker to carrier.

One of his typical missions occurred during the battle of the Coral Sea on May 7, 1942, when he was assigned to the Lexington. The night before, messages from reconnaissance planes had reported a Jap task force 150 miles to the northward. Steaming along with the Lexington was the Yorktown.

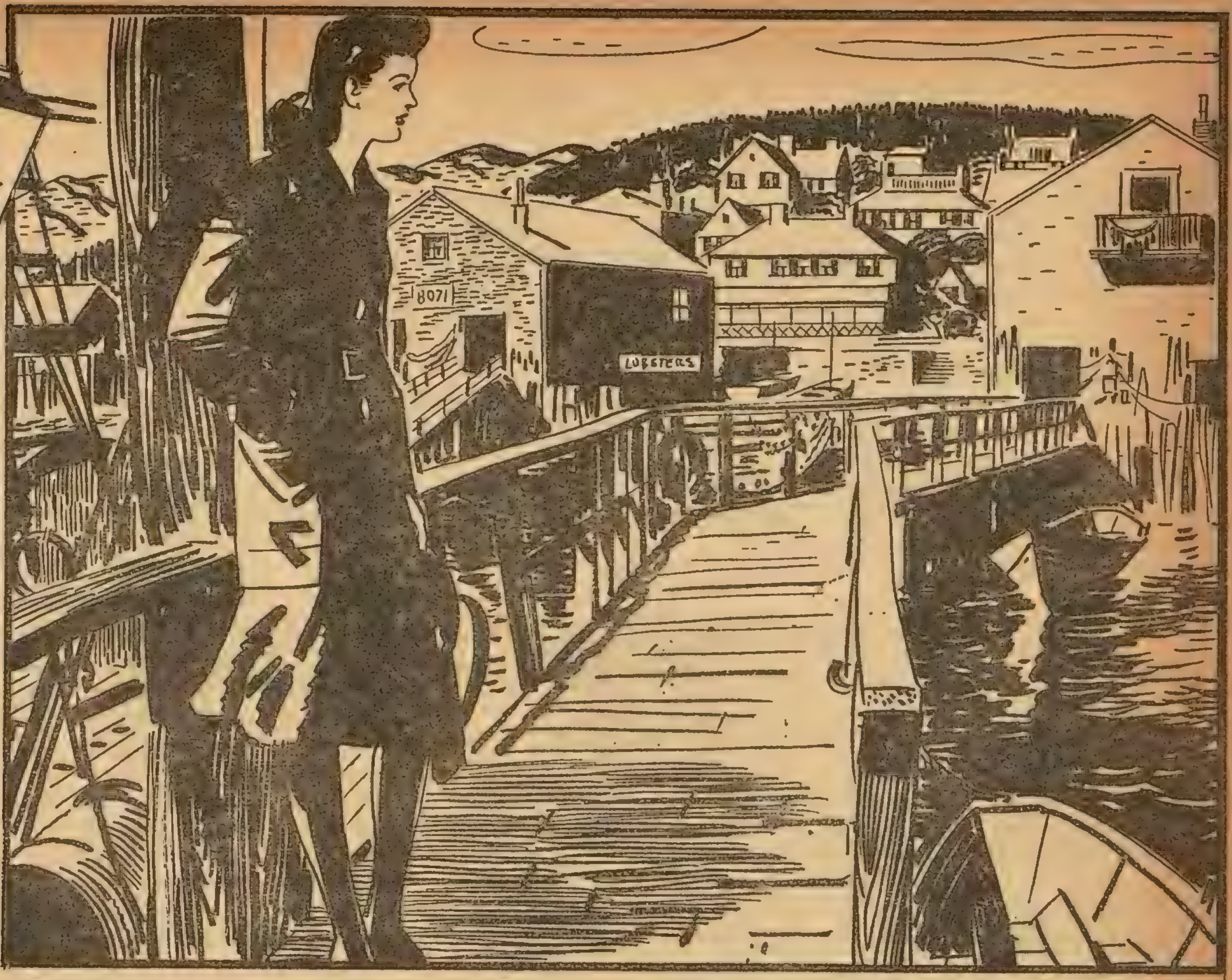
"We took off at dawn," Commander Farrington said, "with twelve torpedo bombers, twelve dive bombers, and about ten fighters in my group. The weather was clear, and as our thirty-four planes roared in at high altitude in tight formation, we could see the Jap task force plunging along below—four heavy cruisers, six destroyers, and the big carrier Ruykaku.

"I don't know why—maybe just stupidity—but the screening destroyers and cruisers had opened out too wide from the carrier, leaving us plenty of holes to go through. Now the real action began. You see, the idea of a co-ordinated attack is to split up over the target in order to spread the enemy fire. The fighters act as top cover while the dive bombers maneuver high and the torpedo bombers swing down for their low-level runs. The dive bombers

(Continued on page 77)

A Liberty BOOK CONDENSATION
READING TIME ONE EVENING

ILLUSTRATED BY GLEN THOMAS



High Tide At Noon

BY ELISABETH OGILVIE

Joanna Bennett and the man she married were both gamblers. Her risk was on love, while he staked his money on cards and his life against wind and sea. This is a romance of great vitality, set in the miniature world of a remote fishermen's island.

ON her nineteenth birthday Joanna Bennett stood in her little room, watching the purple winds of dusk come down across the cove. Everyone had a heart's desire, she knew. She couldn't have put hers into words. But the breath and being of the Island pervaded it. I'll never live anywhere else but here, she thought. This is Bennett's Island. We're the Bennetts. We'll live here forever.

She looked down at her sheer stockings, the new suède shoes, and at the little silver watch on her slim brown wrist, and smiled.

At intervals during the busy March day she had thought, I'm nineteen! And it had sent a tingling warmth all through her.

Downstairs, the back door was flung open, and voices arose in the kitchen, deep and strong and merry, full of vitality and the hungry delight of coming into a bright warm kitchen and the smell of supper, and Donna's smile. The men were back from hauling their lobsters. It was time to run downstairs and get back to work, birthday or not.

They were all talking at once in the kitchen. They had been gone since morning, because it had been the first good hauling day in two weeks. Now, home in the warm lamplit kitchen, with money in their pockets and supper on the way, they were boisterous as they kicked off rubber boots and washed up. The two little boys, Mark and Stevie, had already scrubbed and were hanging around their big brothers.

Stephen Bennett put on his moccasins and went over to the dresser, where his wife, Donna, was busy. Joanna heard his quiet voice around his pipe. "Donna, where'd this bunch of wild hawks come from?"

The spatula hovered over the birthday cake she was frosting. "I married a wild hawk."

Philip had come out of the turmoil around the sink.

[illegible]right, 1944, by Elisabeth Ogilvie. [illegible] by Th[illegible] Crowell Company, New York, N. Y. Price, $2.75.

"But you tamed him, lady," he said. "Tamed him proper, too."

"I wonder who'll tame *them.*" Her blue-gray eyes rested serenely on her two other grown sons. "I don't wonder about you, Philip. You were born with manners, and a way of thinking first. But those two . . ."

The first son, Charles, and Owen, the third, were wrestling now, hard and supple bodies driving one against the other, steel wrist against wrist, broad shoulder against shoulder. "Charles has something to keep him in line," Donna said thoughtfully. "He's got to remember he'll be standing in his father's place some day. But Owen—"

"He's the wildest of the lot," Joanna put in.

Philip lifted a quizzical eyebrow. "Ever think what a flock of strange women we'll bring into the family?"

"Often," said his father.

"I don't worry," Donna said. "But I think you boys will have to go off the Island for your wives—there's not much choice here right now."

They all laughed. Philip's eyes and Donna's were the same clear bright gray-blue, crinkling at the corners and full of tiny sparkles when they laughed. Whoever got Philip would be luckiest of all the Bennett wives, Joanna thought. But all Bennett wives would be fortunate women.

"Where's the food?" Owen struck the dresser with a huge brown fist, and the lamps jumped.

"There goes that rooster again!" said Philip. They streamed toward the table, toward the freshly baked hot yeast rolls and yellow butter, the baked stuffed lobster that was Joanna's choice for her birthday supper, the potatoes in their crisp shiny brown jackets, the pickles that held the spicy sweetness of last summer, the kale that might have been freshly pickled instead of taken from a jar in the cellarway, the strong good coffee, and the yellow Jersey cream in the squat pitcher.

Stephen looked around the table at his sons, and his dark eyes rested on each one in turn. He glanced at his wife; a little current of understanding seemed to pass between them. "You boys will be in my place some day. I hope you pick your wives as carefully as I picked mine." His voice was slow and pleasant.

"Is that an order, father?" Charles's black eyes were narrow and brilliant. "You make it sound pretty clear."

"I could make it sound even clearer," said Stephen. "I could tell you I don't ever want to see a Bennett boat anchored in Eastern End Cove."

"Don't worry, father," Philip said pleasantly. "I guess Mateel Trudeau won't look at anybody the Island can provide."

"Same with Jo," said Owen. "She turns up her nose at all of 'em."

"Except Nils. Old Faithful," murmured Philip.

Donna said comfortably, "There's no foolishness between Nils and Joanna."

The sharp intensity in the poise of Charles's head, in his whole bearing, relaxed. He sat back and took out his cigarettes.

Joanna stood up and began to cut her birthday cake. Of course her mother was right, she was thinking. Nils Sorensen had always been her chum—another brother to her, but a little better because he was generous with his boat and his gun and his cigarettes. He took her to dances in the clubhouse and to church in the schoolhouse.

Not long ago she had said to him with a little chuckle, "Lots of people on the Island think we go round together. You know—that sweetheart stuff."

"Crazy as hell, aren't they?" Nils answered, his strong-featured face impassive under the broad visor of the cap that covered his yellow hair.

ON a morning when spring was just perceptible, Nils kept a promise to take Joanna hauling with him. A promise was a promise with Nils. He waited patiently beside his boat until she came racing down to the beach, slim and boyish in her dungarees. To be on the water and around boats was as necessary to Joanna as the air she breathed. She had scrambled through her daily household chores and packed lunch for them.

She got aboard and Nils took the oars. He rowed standing up, with long effortless movements. At his first buoy he began to haul, Joanna helping. They talked little while they worked. At noon Nils shipped oars and they ate mammoth sandwiches of beef and homemade bread, while the water chuckled and slapped at the sides of the double-ender.

By the end of the day they had a fine haul, and Nils said, "You're no Jonah."

When they were walking up the hill together, Nils stopped in the shadow of a windbreak of spruces. He put his hands on Joanna's shoulders and held her still.

"Jo, I've been thinking about this for a hell of a while. I'm twenty-one and you're nineteen." His lean cheekbones were suddenly stained with red. "Jo, I want to marry you."

She stood very still under the weight of his hands on her shoulders, the fingers tightening until they hurt. She searched the face before her with urgent and startled eyes. Each detail stood out with a new and strange clarity. This is Nils, she told herself. This is Nils . . . old Nils . . .

"That's what I want," he was saying. "I've always wanted it." His mouth relaxed in a fleeting smile. "Surprised, aren't you? You look white. I didn't mean to scare you."

"I'm not scared." She grinned at him. "Golly, Nils, I—I don't know what to say."

"You don't have to say anything. Just think about it." He let her go.

For the first time in her life, her eyes avoided his. For an instant his whole face tightened. Then he grinned suddenly, the quick boyish grin she'd always known.

"O. K., Jo. What is it?"

"I'm sorry, Nils," she said, seeking painfully for the exact words and not finding them. "But—well, I'm not in love with anybody, don't you see?" She could feel her cheeks fire.

"All right, Jo. Don't say anything more."

"But I—" She stopped helplessly. There must be something I can do or say, she thought; but at the same time she knew there was nothing.

THE Island was having a spell of raw gray weather. Waking each day to lowering skies and wailing gulls, to the dark wall of the woods, the pewter-colored harbor, and the keening wind, the Islanders talked yearningly of what they would do when it turned fine again. In the Bennett house, the men were irritable, denied the outlet of work and a chance to get healthily tired. Donna had her household preoccupations, and she and Joanna talked constantly and carefully about everything under the sun—except the one subject that had suddenly become a painful one—Charles.

A week ago Charles had disregarded his father's warning. He had married Mateel Trudeau, from the Eastern End.

Mateel was pretty and sweet and of finer fiber than her somewhat shiftless family. She and Charles had gone ashore alone and been married, and then Charles had brought her home and faced them all.

"This is the one I wanted," he said. "So I married her." With his eager smile, he added, "Well, isn't anybody going to welcome the bride?" All of them had responded except Stephen Bennett. His face was like dark iron as he turned and walked out of the room.

"We'll go now," Charles said. His arm was around Mateel. He looked as if he would never smile again. Bennett pride had met Bennett pride. Stephen Bennett had sent his eldest son from home.

JOANNA stood at the sink, the dishwater around her thin strong wrists. Dinner had been eaten and the men were standing around the stove, tobacco smoke wreathing their black heads, calming the restlessness of fishermen kept ashore by the weather. The little boys, Mark and Stevie, were quiet, listening to the talk.

All the Bennett sons, except Philip, had the gypsy darkness, the black eyes, the long-legged frame of their father. Joanna had it, too. As she washed the dishes, she glanced up at her face in the mirror, and said seriously to herself, Am I pretty? Her eyes glinted at their reflection from a sooty curl of lash, and her brows were wide black brush strokes. She smiled so that a dimple came into one cheek, to match the cleft in her chin. Well, not bad, she decided impersonally, and she finished up her job.

Every day of this long spell of weather Joanna had gone out for a solitary walk. Today she wandered down across the dun-colored meadow and through the dark woods, past the orchard that looked as if it had forgotten how to blossom, and out across the Whitcomb property. The old white house had been empty as long as she could remember. Once she used to wish that someone mysterious and exciting would move into it.

She met no one as she passed through the lane and came to the store. Some men sat inside talking politics in half-hearted fashion, when she asked for yeast and sugar. She knew what they'd talk about when she went out. They'd talk about Charles. She held her head high as she left with her purchases. She walked down through the long covered shed and came out on the empty wharf. The wind moaned around the spilings and whistled across the wet, green-slimed rocks below. The tide was ebbing from the ledges that showed dreary and black; the cries of the gulls were forlorn. Joanna sat down on a log and leaned back against a hogshead. A weary sense of loss went through her. Her eyes smarted as she looked toward the Eastern End where Charles stayed, and the white surf charged the dripping ledges, sliding back into the foam-flecked swells.

Between Brigport and the Island the water had a wintry chop. That the seas were high, out there in the open, she knew when the spar buoy was sometimes hidden from sight by a wash of dark water. Between Brigport and the red spar a boat moved with painful slowness against the power of wind and sea. She watched it idly, not seeing it clearly because it was gray and so far away, but she knew in her mind and body how the bow was plunging and dripping and how each timber would be straining to move ahead; how sometimes the boat would almost stop for a moment, the engine faltering like an overworked heart. Then would come the quick downward plunge into the trough, the nose going under the white wash of water, now coming up valiantly to keep on fighting.

Who would be out today? Certainly no one in Brigport was foolish enough to go out hauling in a sea like this. Joanna watched the uncertain progress of the small boat. Suddenly she realized that the engine had broken down.

Her muscles tightened and she sat forward to watch. Did anyone see this fisherman from Brigport? No one lived at that end; it was all dark woods. And if someone put out from Bennett's, he'd be on the ledges before they could reach him, the way the wind was blowing. He's a fool, whoever he is, she thought anxiously. It wasn't any Island man, taking chances with a tricky engine in this weather. Some transient fisherman, some old derelict, she thought.

She stood up. Somebody would have to go out to him. She took one last look before she turned toward the store. The boat was on its way again, heading past those black ledges. Joanna sat down on the log again. A fine mess it would be if the engine broke down in the harbor mouth. She'd feel guilty for the rest of her life if she didn't stay and watch.

So she waited while the little boat tossed like a chip in the wicked top chop raised by the wind, the tide running against the wind. The tiller ropes would be groaning now, the timbers protesting, and the water pummeling brutally against the sides.

But suddenly, with a little leap and an air of taking a long breath, the small shabby gray boat came into still water.

"You made it, brother!" said Joanna, and a gull perched on a near-by spiling gave her a startled glance and took off into the wind. Joanna waited to give a friendly greeting to the man, and let him know someone had been watching in case he couldn't start his engine. Her father had always been cordial to transients, making them feel they were welcome to a night's anchorage, and his children were just as hospitable.

She looked down at the scarred boat with its peeling paint and mended sprayhood. She saw a man in a battered felt hat bent over the open engine box.

"You had quite a time, didn't you, skipper?" she called down to him. "I thought maybe you weren't going to make port."

"Did you have any bets on it?" he said, and looked up. She stared back at him, feeling her cheeks grow hot. This wasn't any battered derelict. This man was tall and young and very straight. He took off his hat. He was sandy-haired. "Hello," he added politely.

"Hello," she said. "I was going to tell you I saw you break down. Somebody would've come for you."

"Thanks." His smile was oddly gentle and gay across his lean face. He swung up the ladder toward her. "But I wasn't worried. Maybe you can tell me where the Whitcomb place is."

"Why, yes." Joanna lifted her eyebrows. "But nobody lives there—they moved away years ago."

Again the faint smile lit up his eyes, narrow in the thin face that was whitened by salt. They were a curious color, between brown and green. She caught herself watching the play of light in them. Bennett eyes were so dark and deep.

"I know they moved away. They were my grandparents. Martha Whitcomb was my mother."

"Really?" This was exciting. "Why, they were early settlers here—they came right after my grandfather and Gunnar Sorensen came. Of course, Martha—that is, your mother—went away and got married before I was born. I remember your grandfather just a little bit. My father was awfully fond of him."

"I'm Alec Douglass, Alexander Charles-Edward Douglass." His mouth quirked. "My father was a Scot."

"I'm Joanna Bennett. Is the Charles-Edward for Bonnie Prince Charlie?"

"You guessed it. A couple hundred years ago some of us were chasing around with him in the Highlands and my father never forgot it."

THEY went through the shed and came out past the store. Alec Douglass glanced at it.

"I'll come back and get my supplies after I've seen the place."

"You sound as if you were staying for a while."

"I am," he said easily. "What about my boat? Can I leave her tied up there?"

"You'll have to talk with Pete Grant about it. He owns the store and the wharf, and he's got a mooring he lets people use." She led him up a lane at the end of which Whitcomb house showed white against the blackly wooded hillside, the neglected fields surrounding it a tangle of tall grass and wild berry vines.

"There you are," she said.

"So that's the house my mother used to tell me about," Alec Douglass murmured, and something in his voice made Joanna glance at him. He caught her look and said, "She's dead. So is my father."

"I'm sorry," Joanna said. The house would be a lonely place to come to, for a man with no one but himself. "It doesn't look very inviting, does it? This is a bad day, I don't even know if there's a stove. And how would you cook?"

He smiled at her. "The gods will provide. They always do—almost always . . . Thanks a lot, Joanna Bennett."

Joanna hesitated. The house looked chill and dismal up there against the woods, with the sea of brown grass before it. Closed for years, it would be as damp as a tomb. And if there were no stove, how was Alec Douglass to make even a cup of coffee for himself?

She glanced at his thin clear-cut profile as he looked up the lane, and saw the deep lines of fatigue cut beside his mouth, the faint redness around his eyes from hours in the cold wind. He was very thin, and so were his faded denim trousers. He looked as if he were trying not to shiver, as if he were chilled to the bone. And—as if he were trying to be very gay about the whole business.

She knew what her father would have done if he'd been on the wharf when the boat came. He had brought home more than one new arrival; he said a good hot meal put heart into a man when nothing else would work. And this was Cyrus Whitcomb's grandson.

That would have made up Stephen's mind for him. It made up Joanna's.

She said, "Come up to our house for supper. My father will want to see you."

He didn't waste time in polite protest. He answered simply, "I'd like to see him, too."

"We'll go back this way, then," Joanna said. As they went along the path by the well, there was a rattle of water pails and she hailed the sound.

"Ahoy yourself!" Owen's voice came back on the wind. "What you got with you—Nils?"

"This is my brother, Owen," Joanna said. "Alec Douglass. He's coming to supper."

"Hello!" Owen's hand came out. "Glad to know you."

THEY reached the back door and Joanna opened it. Owen went in first with the sloshing water pails, and warm light and the smell of supper flowed out past him. Donna Bennett looked up questioningly, the coffeepot in her hand. She was slender and tall. Her light-brown hair was silky, bound by the neat braids she had always worn.

"Company, darlin'!" said Owen, lifting the pails to the dresser. "Jo's lugged something home in the way of salvage. Haven't got a chance for a good look at him yet, myself."

His grin was wide and friendly, but his dark eyes were keen. Stephen Bennett came out from the sitting room, and Philip turned from contemplation of the darkness outside the seaward windows. Alec Douglass shut the door behind him and stood looking back at them, his hat at his side. In spite of the strong Scots nose and gaunt height, there was something boyish about him, with his tumbled brown hair and his quiet gentle smile.

"This is Alec Douglass, from Jonesport," said Joanna. "He's Cyrus Whitcomb's grandson, and I thought—"

"Can't you see he's chilled to the bone?" Her mother's voice cut in. "Get over to the stove, lad, and warm yourself."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Alec Douglass, and Joanna knew a sudden joyous warmth around her heart. It was all right to bring him home, and Donna was wonderful, she thought worshipfully.

Philip opened the oven door and pushed a chair in front of it. Stephen said, "Did you say Cyrus Whitcomb's grandson?"

"Yes, sir," said Alec, and put out his hand.

Stephen took it, a sudden light of interest warm across his face. "Welcome to Bennett's Island. I never knew Cyrus had a grandson, but I'm glad to see him. Come down to look at the old place?"

"Come down to live in it, sir."

Stephen lifted a quizzical eyebrow. "Well, we can always use new blood on the Island. Lobster fisherman, are you? Where've you been fishing?"

"I've been fishing around Jonesport way, sir. Living with my sister—there's quite a crew of sisters I've got, and I'm the only boy. Grandfather died when I was a tyke, and my dad was drowned. My mother died when I was sixteen." He shrugged. "I've been living with my oldest sister, but I got tired of it after a while. Grandfather always talked a lot about the Island and the Bennetts. I guess he'd never have left it if grandma hadn't been sick and had to be near a doctor."

He smiled faintly. "But once when I was small he took me down to Vinalhaven, and from a hill over there he pointed out the Island to me. I never forgot how it looked, 'way out on the horizon."

"So one day you had to come and find it," said Joanna. She saw in her mind the old man and the little brown-haired boy, looking out across the trackless bay at a magic blue line floating between sea and sky; and the boy remembering, day after day, year after year.

"A young fellow like you ought to have a lot of chances on the mainland if he gets tired of fishing," said Stephen. "It's not many who'd choose to come out to this little place."

"I was fed up," said Alec frankly. "There wasn't any future. The rest signed over the house to me and gave me their blessing."

"We'll give you a hand fixing it up," said Owen exuberantly. It was easy to see he'd taken a great liking to Alec Douglass. "Say, what about your boat? Is she on Pete Grant's mooring?"

"Gosh. I'd better go talk to him."

Owen picked up his jacket. "Come on, I'll go along with you."

They went out, and Donna said briskly, "Set another place, Joanna. Stephen—" She paused and looked at her husband. "Are you going to let him sleep out aboard his boat on a night like this, or in that musty old vault of a house?"

They considered each other, a grave question in their eyes. Donna said, with serene deliberation, "We can put him in Charles's bed."

"Whatever you say," Stephen answered, and went into the sitting room. Silence fell on the kitchen. The two women worked swiftly, without looking at each other. There was butter to be cut, cream to be poured, a plate heaped with cookies.

Owen and Alec, their cheeks whipped red by the raw wind, their eyes still glinting from some shared joke, returned. A hook was cleared for Alec's jacket and hat—Charles's hook, Joanna saw with a brief constriction in her throat.

"Look what I found aboard Alec's boat!" Owen held aloft a battered violin case. "I brought it up so he could give us a tune after a while."

"My grandfather used to tell me about the dances down here," Alec said. He strode to Donna to take the heavy lamp from her hands and put it on the table. "When I started playing my dad's fiddle, I wondered if I'd ever play at a dance on Bennett's Island."

His eyes met Joanna's and smiled, with the curious green-brown lights. "Supper's ready," she said. "Come on, everybody."

The atmosphere was fragrant with good food and openhearted hospitality. They were set, each Bennett, on making Alec Douglass feel completely welcome. Seemingly there was no cloud in their world, no thought of Charles down at the Eastern End.

And they put Alec Douglass in Charles's chair.

JOANNA had help with the dishes that night, in spite of her protests. "I always wiped the dishes for my sister," Alec said.

"But you're company now."

"I'm an Islander." He leaned against the dresser and looked at her intently. "At least I'm aiming to be one. I'm not so damn stuck on myself that I think I'm going to walk right in and be one of the boys."

"You're really not a stranger," Joanna pointed out. "Your grandfather had his home here and his shore privilege." She felt an illogical desire to push his hair off his forehead. "If you're honest, and you work hard, and you're willing to lend a hand—"

"And take advice," drawled Philip from the doorway. "You'll have everybody and his brother telling what to do and how to do it."

"Thanks. I'm glad to take advice from the Bennetts, and follow it. My grandfather always said they were the salt of the earth."

"You've never done much lobstering, you told me," Owen said. "Come out in the shop and we'll show you some of the rigging you need for it."

"Mind if I finish this first?" Alec picked up a handful of wet silver, and Owen retorted in good-natured scorn, "Cripes, you'll ruin the wench, wiping dishes. Spoil her. Come on, Alec."

"When I finish." He grinned as the boys went out.

"Thank you very much for helping me," said Joanna firmly, hanging up the dish towels by the stove. "Now I'll show you the way to the shop."

Alec considered her with bright green-brown eyes. "You are a verra deter-r-r-mined young woman, Miss Bennett."

When she came back to the house, she stood for a moment in the empty kitchen. She laid her hands against her cheeks and felt the warmth of her skin—windburn, she thought. Suddenly she remembered Nils. Poor Nils, with his dark sea-blue eyes and his grim mouth, asking her to marry him. But something came between her and the picture of Nils.

As she walked into the other room with her easy arrogant Bennett carriage, her father was saying to her mother, "Well, then, feed him up here till he gets a stove of his own." His rare smile flickered at Joanna. "Your mother is smitten," he said to her.

When the boys came in, Owen brought Alec's fiddle from the kitchen and put it in Alec's hands. Alec looked questioningly at Donna and Stephen.

"I'd like to hear you, Alec," said Donna.

"Go ahead," murmured Stephen from behind his newspaper.

Alec took his fiddle affectionately into his hands, put it under his chin, and tuned it. His eyes twinkled around at them all; he looked pleased because they wanted him to play. At Joanna, his glance halted.

"What'll I play?"

"Anything at all," she said. "Please." For an instant their eyes held; then he laid his cheek against the smooth warm-toned wood and poised the bow. There was a sudden sharp pause in the room; without any gesture but the placing of the violin, the lifting of the bow, he had become the center. All the others watched him. Joanna felt a queer, breathless detachment, as if she were watching from very far away. Lamplight caught in his hair, turning the light brown to ruddy gold, but his face was thrown into shadow; his hair and the instrument were the same color.

The music lilted in the room, the fingers flew with magic certainty across the strings, the bow danced, and Alec Douglass laughed as he played—his laughter reflected in the quiet shine of Donna's eyes, in Owen's vivid face, in Philip's tilted head, and in Stephen's absently tapping foot. Joanna, sitting on the couch, felt a sudden wild exultant happiness sweep through her body until she wanted to jump up or dance or shout.

When, abruptly, he had finished and taken the fiddle from under his chin, there was a breathless stillness until Owen let out a long reverent whistle.

"If you ever played like that at a dance, you'd have 'em going right through the roof!"

Alec's smile was pleased and diffident. "I'm glad you like it. But—" He shrugged, and laid the violin in the case. "Fiddling isn't much. I'd rather be a good lobsterman." Without the music he was only a tall, too thin young man again, sandy-haired, gaunt, cleanly shabby. A little shy.

Donna closed her workbasket and stood up. "Alec, you're staying here tonight."

"But that's too much, ma'am!" He got up quickly, color rising in his lean cheeks. "I can sleep aboard the boat."

"Philip will show you your room," Donna said firmly; and Joanna knew her mother couldn't bear to look at Charles's bed.

ON a windless sunny afternoon, with the harbor silken and blue, Alec and Joanna went rowing.

As they slid by Alec's fishing boat, he said, "I'd take you out for a sail in her, but she's pretty dirty. As soon as I make enough from my trawls to pay for my shingles and stuff, I'm going to fix up the old lady."

"You're really going to say here, then," said Joanna.

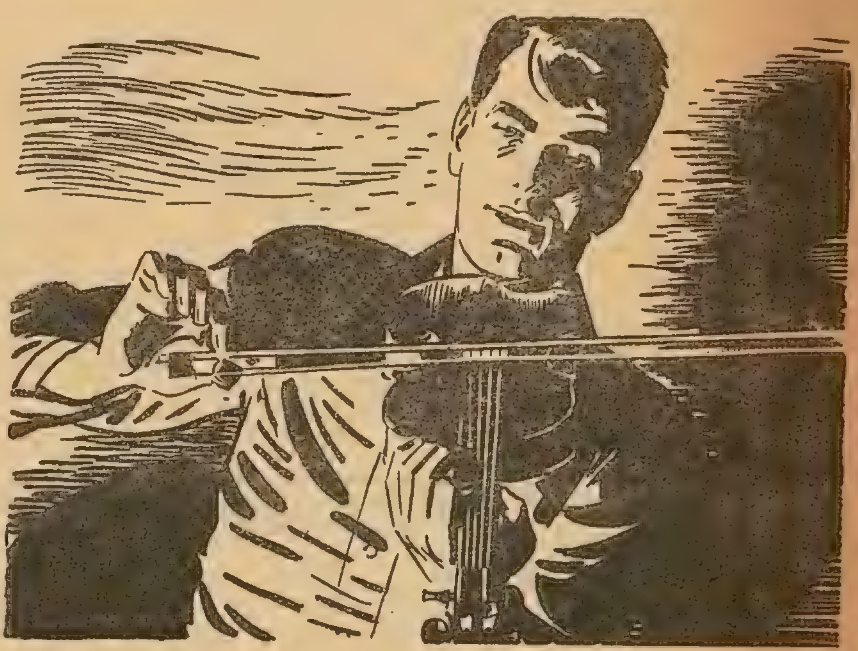
"This place is just about the answer to everything, Joanna," he said quietly. "A man could be happy here, forever."

Their glances met, smiling. They were caught up in a wordless peace as the boat cut across the bright water. Alec whistled under his breath. It wasn't until they turned back toward the harbor that the spell was broken.

Alec squinted at the sun. "Gosh. I've got a date for supper at five thirty. But Jo—" He smiled at her enchantingly. "Say the word and we'll stay out here and see the sunset."

"I won't say it. What'll people say if you don't show up after they invited you?" She wondered sharply who had invited him. It could be almost anyone; the whole Island had taken a deep and protective interest in Alec.

As they came past the old wharf, Joanna saw Nils tying up his punt on the shore. He was gone before Alec beached his double-ender. The fishhouses and wharves were deserted now. Alec pulled up the boat and Joanna waited for him. She watched his long hands as he tied the painter, remembering their certain swiftness with the violin.



He was still thin, but less gaunt; a tribute to the baked beans and chowder, hot bread and pie that Donna was forever sending down to him.

He came up the beach toward her, his old hat on the back of his head.

"Thanks for the ride," she said. "I loved it." She turned away.

"Oh, look here! Wait a minute, Jo!" He sounded oddly anxious. "Can I—can't you—will you go with me to haul my trawls sometime?" His cheeks reddened under the tan.

"Sometime," said Joanna coolly. "So long, Alec." They separated. Alec went toward the village, whistling; Joanna, walking around the anchor, stifled an impulse to kick it hard.

A WEEK later a crazy westerly storm hit the Island just at supper time. Gust after gust crashed against the Bennett house, high and unprotected on its slope. The men finished supper in wordless haste, their faces unmoved. Donna, too, seemed undisturbed; she had been an Island wife too long to show alarm when a crazy westerly threatened the boats.

It didn't help to be afraid. You needed more than fear to make the moorings hold.

While they were putting on their boots, Alec came in.

"How's your mooring?" Stephen asked sharply.

"All right, I guess."

"You guess!" Owen snorted. "I guess you better keep your eye on it. You just got one boat between you and the harbor mouth, and the way that old sea's pounding in—"

"Sure, I'll watch her," said Alec easily. His faint smile touched his eyes as he looked at Joanna. He went out with the other men.

Joanna's heart pounded with her excitement. "I'm going, too!" She grabbed her jacket and ran out.

Down at the shore the men were working against time. Traps that had been apparently safe above the high-water line must be moved to the other side of the boardwalk; it took two men to carry a heavy trap with any degree of speed, so everywhere they worked together, brothers and cousins, fathers and sons, friends and enemies.

Women, with coats hugged around their necks to keep out the chill winds as they watched their men, talked in high, excited voices to one another, and lent a hand when they could. Children ran wild underfoot, shrieking.

Suddenly a shout rose. A boat had begun to drag her mooring. Running the length of the wharf, jumping down to the beach, Philip untied a dory. Alec and Owen came pell-mell behind him. Almost instantly the dory was in the water, with Owen and Philip rowing and Alec crouched in the stern. It was his boat that had broken loose. She had moved down the harbor until she had come up against Owen's boat. With each sea the two boats came together hard. The dory seemed small and impotent, fighting its way across the waves.

Alec's eyes never left his boat. When at last the dory slid alongside her, he was aboard in one scrambling leap. He got the painter into his hands and pulled the dory alongside, holding it while the other two climbed aboard. Owen made the painter fast to the bitt on the stern deck, and Alec started the engine. Joanna's heart was big with pride as they came in. Her brothers and Alec Douglass had conquered the sea; she had seen it happen before her very eyes. To the others, it meant only that a boat had been brought in when she dragged her mooring; to Joanna, it was living proof of the invincibility of her men.

Her men. She tasted the words on her lips, and knew shock; only two of them had been her men, her brothers. Her face began to burn, but she thought it was the wind.

They were hauling the dory up when she came along the beach. Alec's boat was made snugly fast, lines forward and astern, in the lee of the wharf.

"Did you leave some coffee on the stove?" said Philip, looking out of the dusk. "We want some."

"There's plenty. And fresh doughnuts, too."

"Come on, lads," said Philip, and Owen and Alec joined them.

Owen was laughing and excited, and Joanna felt a deep wave of joy when she saw his hand close around Philip's arm, heard him say, laughing, "What's better than one Bennett in a tight spot?"

Alec said promptly, "Two Bennetts and a Douglass. Where's that coffee?"

Like a triumphal procession they turned along the road for home. Lights streamed down across the meadow toward them.

In the entry the boys stopped to peel off their spray-soaked jackets and wet rubber boots. Owen was through first and into the kitchen, shouting, "Ahoy, house! Where's my darlin'?" Philip said over his shoulder, "I'll dig up some slippers for you, Alec," and he too had gone. Presently their voices came out from the sitting room.

Kitchen lamplight streamed on Alec bending down to pull off his boots, and on Joanna, standing against the outer door, wondering why she didn't go into the house with the others. He straightened up and looked down at her. Then, with one swift motion, he shut the kitchen door, and in the sheltering blackness of the entry, he took her into his arms. His lips were warm and firmly gentle against hers. She felt the deep thudding of his heart and hoped passionately that he could feel hers. They heard Owen come whistling across the kitchen. Without haste or alarm, they kissed and separated. Alec opened the door, and they went in.

IN late October the rose haws burned red against the gray rocks where the wild roses had bloomed fragile and pink. The gulls drifted high over Schoolhouse Cove, and Joanna watched them from her bedroom window, her hair loose on her bare shoulders. It was the afternoon of her wedding, but she could always find time for the gulls. They were her friends; they had always meant freedom to her. Alec and I will be free, Joanna was thinking.

She finished her dressing without haste, and stood before the small mirror over the chest to put the white flowers in her hair. Alec had wanted them. She remembered a night when she and Alec had walked to Sou-west Point in the moonlight with the fragrance of blackberry blossoms in the air.

"Look at them," Alec said. "White flowers in the moonlight."

On an impulse Joanna had dropped to her knees in the grass and put her face close against the blossoms. She sat back on her heels and smiled up at Alec. "I always wanted to do that. Did I look silly?"

"You look beautiful." Very tall he was against the moon-washed sky before he bent and broke off a cluster and tucked it behind her ear. He cupped her chin in his hand and said gently, "My darling," before he kissed her.

The next day, when she saw him lounging across the beach, thin and lanky in his dungarees and rubber boots; when he came to the house and wrestled on the grass with Mark and Stevie—whenever she saw him as he moved among the Islanders, she had felt her heart quicken.

For this was the Alec that they all knew and liked; but she knew a different one, an Alec who tucked white flowers behind her ear and called her darling. It was with this Alec that she shared a dream, a world where no one else could ever come. Just to think about it now brought a lovely color to her face. She didn't need rouge or lipstick.

Voices came up to her from downstairs. Everyone on the Island had been invited to the wedding. So Stephen's father had always done; so Stephen would always do.

Joanna herself had gone down to the Eastern End to ask Charles to come. He'd been knitting trap heads in the kitchen, as clean-shaven and neat as ever, his shirt just as white. Charles always wanted to wear white shirts for everything. The kitchen was very clean, and Mateel looked very happy and no longer terrified. Color flashed into her face when Joanna told them about the wedding.

But Charles had shaken his head. His dark face was impassive. "Sorry, Jo. But we're better off down here in our own neck of the woods, with our baby coming, and all. Thanks just the same, Jo."

"You stiff-necked Bennett!" she raged at him. She could have cried as she walked back home through the woods.

When the cottage organ, brought up from the schoolhouse, began the wedding march, Joanna stood very still at the head of the stairs, her hand on her brother's arm. Then it seemed only an instant before they were in the big sitting room. It was crowded now.

She saw Nils standing back against a window, serious and scrubbed-looking in his dark blue suit. Nils, you wanted it to be you, she thought swiftly in that instant. But you'll marry some day, and she'll be a lucky girl, whoever she is.

Funny the way some faces stood out so clearly before her eyes. She had one glimpse of Simon Bird. He and his brother, Ash, were the Island's pariahs. Joanna had never lost a memory of panic and struggle with Simon once, long ago, in the blackness of the schoolhouse entry during a Christmas party. Her eyes left his pasty face, and then she saw Alec.

He was waiting for her; he had that waiting look in his eyes and in the tilt of his head. Their glances met across the little space left between them and they smiled. As if she had been journeying toward him for all her life, she reached his side.

In the annals of Bennett's Island, Joanna's wedding shared the day with another family event. At dusk, after the guests had gone and Alec had taken his bride home, Charles Bennett walked into his father's house. He was haggard and frightened. He went straight to his mother, where he had always gone when he wanted help.

"It's the baby—" his voice choked. "Mateel fell downstairs about suppertime. She's dying, Mother. Will you come?"

She was moving swiftly toward the entry as she said, "Of course, Charles."

Mateel was sturdy and she had grit. "The bravest girl I've ever seen," Donna told Charles. Before morning there was a grandson in the Bennett family—and his mother was safe. And Stephen Bennett had gone to the Eastern End—he'd put out his hand to his eldest son at last.

IT was noontime, and the month was almost November. Joanna and Alec had been married a year, and still his name was a little song that ran on and on inside her, and still he came home to her as a lover would come. Walking down to the harbor now to meet him, she thought, We've been blessed from the start. It will always be right for us.

She reached the wharf just as he came in, and they walked home sedately through the village, not arm in arm as they walked at night. "Hello, sweetness," Alec murmured.

"Darling," she whispered.

In the kitchen they went into each other's arms. Their embrace was long and silent, and it ended in Joanna's little broken laugh as they separated.

"Back to work," said Alec. "Where's my dinner, woman?" He laid a handful of bills and change on the table. "I'll bet I was low man today. Only forty-seven pounds." He took a five-dollar bill from the handful and laid it beside Joanna's plate, but she pushed it back.

"Let it go this time, Alec. You'd better put it all in the money box."

"But what about that order you want to send? That dress—"

"I'm not buying dresses while the lobsters aren't crawling, Alec."

He grinned and put the money back in his pocket. "You're the boss, honey."

When dinner was over and the kitchen in order, she went into the sitting room where he lay on the couch reading. He shut his book and moved over; she lay down beside him.

"Alec," she said, "we spent a lot on clothes this year. Now let's spend on something else."

"Your hair smells nice. What'll we buy? One of those collie pups over at Brigport?"

Her heart was beating very fast because of what she was going to say: "No; a baby, Alec."

"A *baby?*"

"You know," she laughed nervously. "Little gadget with arms and legs. They holler. Alec, I'd like one before we're two years married."

He hugged her tight against him. "Well, listen, Jo, I want a baby, too. But look—we're just starting out. You're not even twenty-one yet, and we haven't got any bank account. And I made up my mind a long time ago, when I was a kid and there weren't enough clothes to go round, and sometimes not enough to eat, that when I had a family there'd be something to raise it on, first."

"But Alec, we're not poor!" she protested. "And we could save while we're waiting for it."

"That's no way to do. Lobsters went down two cents today. What if they keep going down? What if there's a spell of bad storms this winter and we keep losing gear? Honey, you know what condition my boat's in. Any day I expect to start a couple planks in her. We've got to have a good boat to make a living for children."

She had never known him to be so pessimistic. The gods will provide, he was always saying gaily. Now she said, "If everybody went on like that, nobody on the Island would have any children. Of course, lobstering's a gamble, but I thought that you liked taking chances. Anyhow, we can start the bank account, right now, can't we?"

"Sure. Next time we go ashore we'll go to the bank." He gave her a breathtaking hug and got up. He stood looking down at the warm clear color of her skin, and the blackness of her hair sprayed over the pale cloth of the cushion under her head, the dark curl of her lashes, the way her mouth curved as she smiled up at him.

There was a crash and a clatter in the kitchen, and Owen's voice burst through the silence. "All hands on deck! Hey, Alec!"

In a few minutes, the two men had gone down to the shore, but Joanna still lay dreamily on the couch. She was disappointed about the baby, but since it was his baby, too, she must consider his views. Only, she wished now that she had taken the five dollars at dinnertime; it would have made a good beginning for that bank account.

Presently, she went upstairs to do some work on the spare room. Margaret, the elder sister with whom Alec had lived in Jonesport, had written that she was coming over on the mailboat for a visit as soon as she could manage it. It was rather an exciting prospect for Joanna, to entertain one of her husband's family, though she wouldn't admit it to anyone. And it was a good excuse for a frenzy of painting and papering, which Joanna loved.

Alec told her at supper that he was going out in the evening. "Poker game down at the Eastern End. All right?"

"Go ahead," she replied. "It's only once a week, and it's all the social life we've got around here, except for the clubhouse in the summer." She added seriously, "Only don't let the stakes get too high, Alec."

"We never do."

When he was ready to go, he caught her around the waist. "What'll I give you if I win a lot tonight?"

"Would it be sinful and scandalous to start a bank account for a baby with the money you won in a poker game?"

He said seriously, "You really want a baby, don't you?"

"Alec, I don't want a baby just because it's a baby—I'm not one of those born mothers who marry just to have children. I want your baby."

He kissed her forehead and the widow's peak so sharply black against her smooth warm skin, and was quickly gone.

MORNING drifted over the Island as lightly as fog; or else it came like a trumpet call. On these days before the winter set in it was the trumpet that awoke the Islanders; a trumpet whose notes were rose and gold and scarlet, streaming across sea and sky, exciting the gulls on their barren sanctuaries until they launched on strong white wings into the brilliant air, and began the day.

It was the gulls, screaming and fighting overhead, that awakened Joanna to sunlight on her eyes and Alec in deep sleep beside her. There was not much of him to be seen but a sandy crest, bronze, as the sun slanted across it; but one arm was under Joanna's neck and the other flung over her body. She lay contentedly for a few minutes, listening to his breathing, the wind roaring through the tall trees behind the house, the gulls. The mailboat would have it choppy today.

"Alec," she said.

Almost instantly he awoke. "What's the matter?"

"It's late, and it's boat day today." She lifted herself up on one elbow and looked down at him. "Aren't you a mess!" she said fondly. She kissed him, and then snuggled against his chest. "We've got to get up. Alec, how much did you win last night?"

"Momma, poppa didn't win. He lost."

She felt a twinge of disappointment. It was silly, because at the most he would have won or lost only a few dollars. But it would have been an omen—a sign from Alec's gods—if he had won. She slid out from under the quilts into the cool bright air, and began to dress.

Alec lay cornerwise across the bed so he could look up into her face with twinkling hazel eyes. "Momma love poppa?" he asked pathetically.

"Sometimes. Right now Momma needs some money to pay a bill poppa forgot."

"Which one was that?"

"The last order you sent—for heavy shirts and socks." She pinched his chin. "You're a peach of a manager. If you're taking care of the bills, you're not supposed to forget them."

"I suppose a Bennett never forgets, like an elephant." Alec's eyes laughed up at her. "Joanna, my love, haven't you any money left?"

"You haven't given me my housekeeping money yet this week, and I couldn't save anything from last week, with fixing up the spare room and all. And I don't want to touch the money box. Did you play with *all* the money you got for your lobsters yesterday?" she protested. He'd never done that before.

"It was only about fifteen dollars, Jo. If I'd won—"

"But you didn't win, and something's got to be paid on that bill, and besides—" she couldn't keep the bitterness out of her voice—"I was going to put a dollar aside for the baby."

"There's plenty of time for that, honey." He pulled her close to him. "Mad with me, Jo?"

She couldn't be mad with him, ever. A great wave of tenderness swept over her, strong and warm, driving back some of the baffled feeling. Alec was Alec, and he was all hers.

WHEN he had gone out, whistling, she did her small quota of housework and sat down at the desk in the sitting room. She looked out at the bright windy day outside, the dark blue water whipped into whitecaps beyond the little cove, and remembered the odd, empty feeling she'd had when she and Alec were talking before they got up. It had been a silly way to feel, she thought now, smiling a little at her foolishness. It didn't hurt if Alec was reckless once in a poker game, or if he didn't have anything in his pockets when he went out to haul. Probably it would never happen just that way again.

She didn't want to wait till next boat day to pay that bill. She had found it yesterday and it had startled her. She'd believed Alec had paid it. She had left the bills to him from the start of their marriage, and it had only been by accident that she'd opened the letter requesting payment.

There'd be no harm in taking the necessary amount from the money box. She would put it back this afternoon, after Alec came in. She didn't want to touch the box, for she never had; it was Alec's personal concern, set aside for their savings toward the new boat he needed so badly. But once wouldn't count.

She took the small metal box from its drawer. It was never locked.

There were papers lying just under the cover, some with envelopes, some without. Receipted bills, she thought carelessly, laying them aside. But as she put them down, she glanced at the top one. "Please remit," said the black letters across the paper. She riffled through the others. There were bills a year old. Alec had blithely put them out of sight and forgotten them. True, he had kept his Island bills paid up, but any man getting a foothold would do the same.

She added up the figures swiftly. The total was seven hundred and sixty-nine dollars. She turned back to the money box and began to count the boat savings. Fifty-five dollars.

There should be a lot more than that, an astonished voice said in her brain. She thought over the past year. The hauls had been phenomenal sometimes, and the prices were good. Once a buyer had offered eighty cents a pound.

She remembered Alec's brilliant eyes, the excitement in his gay voice that day. "Fifty dollars for the money box, and what do you want for a present, Jo?"

She felt alone and lost. Alec had become a stranger. She tried to picture him out in the rough sun-flecked waters, with the boat rolling in the white wash from the ledges as he hauled a heavy trap dripping to the gunwale, brushed off the sea urchins, measured his lobsters with the gauge, and tossed them into a keg. As if she were perched on the engine box, she saw the way he tilted his head back and watched the sea gulls soar up from the rocks in a shrieking rush. His eyes would be narrowed against the sun glare, his mouth shaped for his constant whistling. He would whistle all the time he was out there, even when he couldn't hear himself through the heavy drone of the hauling gear and the noisy chuckle and rush of water against the sides. After he'd worked around the Island and about the ledges where the seals tumbled in the surf, he'd come whistling home, shaking out the bait bags and looking back at the gulls which came down like a winged snowfall in the wake.

He'd whistle when he came up the path; he wouldn't stop until he came through the door and took her into his arms. Joanna, sitting at the desk, knew how he would come in. She knew almost everything about him. But she hadn't known about the bills and the money box. And because of that, it wouldn't be her Alec who came whistling home tonight.

She would have to talk to him, she thought, walking nervously through the rooms. Tonight she must ask him about the bills and the money that he'd made in the past year, and it was going to be the hardest thing she'd ever done.

It was suddenly torture to stay indoors. She put on her jacket and went out into the crisp afternoon, to walk in the autumn sunshine and wind along the west side of the Island. Here the spray flew up from the red rocks, flashing in the sunlight, and the air was cold and rough and strong against her face, and the gulls rode high overhead.

When she came back to the house the lamps were lit, their yellow light streaming out into the salt-scented dusk. Alec was boiling lobsters in the kitchen. He waved one at her.

"How's for some chowder tonight? You don't have to do anything—just sit down and let the old expert take over."

He dropped a swift kiss on her nose and went back to the stove. Joanna knew by his manner that he had made a good haul. She didn't object to his getting supper; working around the kitchen, whistling, talking, he didn't notice her restraint. She knew that sense of strangeness would lie upon her until she had talked to him, but she couldn't do it now, while he was happy and proud to be waiting on her. After supper, she promised herself.

But after supper Owen drifted in, and some of the other boys. Alec brought out his fiddle and they made music around the kitchen stove. Before Alec went out next morning he had given her money to pay the clothing bill, and she took it without a word of reference to all those others. She went down to the post office early and sent a money order. It was boat day, but she did not wait to see the Aurora B come in. She was home, busy in the kitchen, when a white, taut-lipped woman walked in. Alec's sister had come.

MRS. JIM COOMBS, born Margaret Douglass, was a tall spare woman with eyes and hair the color of Alec's, but without his charm. She looked as if she had learned to tighten her lips at life. She had been seasick coming across, and she looked wretched and unfriendly. But a true Bennett always rose magnificently to any occasion. Alec came in for dinner, to find the two women apparently at ease.

"Hello, Meggie! So you got here at last—after a year!" He bent over the rocker and kissed her. Her expression remained austere.

Joanna beckoned Alec out of the room and said quietly, "Look, run down and see if Pete got any meat today."

Alec twinkled. "And get it for my sweet smile? I didn't haul this morning, Jo. And I cleaned out my pockets before I left the house."

"All of it went to pay that bill." She stepped back from him. "If you didn't haul, where have you been all morning?"

"Don't look at me as if you suspected me of murder," said Alec merrily. "I got down to the shore and Johnny Trudeau was having a hell of a time with his engine—hadn't been to haul for a couple days—so I spent the morning fixing it."

"Well, then you got paid," said Joanna confidently.

"How could the man pay me when he didn't have any money?" he asked simply. "Besides, I told him to forget it. He's got a big family."

"And you've got a wife and a sister who are hungry." Joanna tilted her chin. "It's dinnertime. There's nothing but potatoes and last summer's greens. What are you going to do about it, Alec?"

She realized all at once that she was furious. Alec seemed totally unaware. He lit a cigarette and said, "We'll have harbor pollack for dinner. They're good, and Meggie likes fish."

"Well, don't tell her it's the same kind you use for bait sometimes." Joanna clattered the frying pan.

She fried the little harbor pollack crisp and brown. The potatoes were mealy, the greens tasted fresh and good. The apple pie and coffee were just about perfection, Alec assured Joanna. Margaret ate with a good appetite, and Alec was always hungry. Joanna was glad the food tasted good to them; it was so much sawdust to her. But she ate and talked and laughed.

After Alec had gone, Margaret went upstairs for a nap. When she came down she looked better. She sat by the sunny window that looked out on the harbor and suddenly began to talk.

"Joanna," she said, "I came here in an awful frame of mind. I didn't know what Alec had gone and married. I didn't know what condition I'd find him in, or what kind of place this was. I guess I just about expected the worst, and I told my husband so."

Joanna laughed. "Well, every sister feels that way when her brothers get married. They always think that the girl isn't nearly good enough. I've got brothers, you know."

"It wasn't that I thought you weren't good enough. But Alec was always an awful problem to me. My husband used to say we'd get rid of him, if he was going to make trouble—"

"What kind of trouble, Margaret?"

"Now don't look so white, child. It wasn't girls, though I wished sometimes it *was* girls instead of cards. There was always a pack of cards in his pocket, and sometimes more money than a boy sixteen or seventeen had a right to have."

"He gambled?" said Joanna.

"I should say so!"

Joanna spoke quietly. "I haven't seen any signs of it in him." One poker game a week through the fall and winter—you couldn't call that gambling.

Margaret said, "Of course you haven't seen any signs! Because he's cured, that's why. He's learnt his lesson. When we sent him down here—"

"*You* sent him?"

"Sure. Us. The family. We didn't know what else to do with him, and since Jim and my sisters' husbands paid up the debts and saved his boat for him, he had to do as we said." She put her hand on Joanna's knee. "Let me tell you, girl, I feel as if somebody had just given me a million dollars. I always knew there was good stuff somewhere in that boy, though sometimes I got downhearted about him." She glanced around the room. "He couldn't buy all this for you if he was wasting his youth and money away in gambling. Just wait till I tell Jim Coombs!"

Joanna sat stiffly in the big chair. She lifted her chin defiantly and smiled at Margaret. Color was a flag flying in her cheeks.

WHEN Joanna and Alec lay in bed that night, the curtains blew inward in the sweet frosty air, and the stars twinkled coldly against the panes. From the other side of Brigport came the occasional moan of the whistling buoy; that meant the weather was right for a fine day tomorrow.

"Meg's a good scout," Alec murmured, drawing Joanna close.

"Yes, I like her a lot. Are you hauling again tomorrow?"

"Yep, I set the alarm for five o'clock. Philip got a hundred pounds today on a one-night set. What do you bet I can beat him?"

"I never bet," she said. "Alec, did you get anything for the money box this afternoon?"

"I sure did, honey. Enough for you to feed Meggie like royalty."

This was the time. Right now. If she didn't speak now, she never would. "Alec, I opened the money box a few days ago. I needed some money. Please tell me the truth, dear. Did you take money out of the box to play poker with?"

"Yes, I took it," he said evenly, after a long time. "Not to play with—I had to pay up."

"I thought the stakes weren't high."

"Sometimes they were. When the boys were flush."

"I suppose you thought if I never opened the box, I'd never know about the bills and the money." She moved away from him.

"My God, Joanna, you act as if I was a thief!"

"It's not that!" Her voice was passionate against the cold anger in his. "I don't blame you for anything, darling. I just wish you'd told me."

"In other words, you don't trust me to handle money."

"I didn't say that," she told him coldly, and was shocked to realize that was exactly what she had meant. Alec said nothing. His breathing was deep and regular. He had fallen asleep in the middle of the argument, or else he was only pretending. Joanna lay wakeful. You went along serenely thinking you knew a man, and then you found out you didn't. You loved him, and you felt you were a part of him, and he was a part of you, and then all at once you were alone again, and it was a desolate feeling.

But the feeling vanished at dawn when Alec kissed her awake, his eyes alight with their curious radiance.

"Love me?"

"I love you," she said meekly.

"You were damn mad last night and I don't blame you. But I won't do it again, Jo honey. Honest, I promise—"

She didn't know what whim, what impulse, made her put her hand over his mouth. "No, Alec, don't ever make promises."

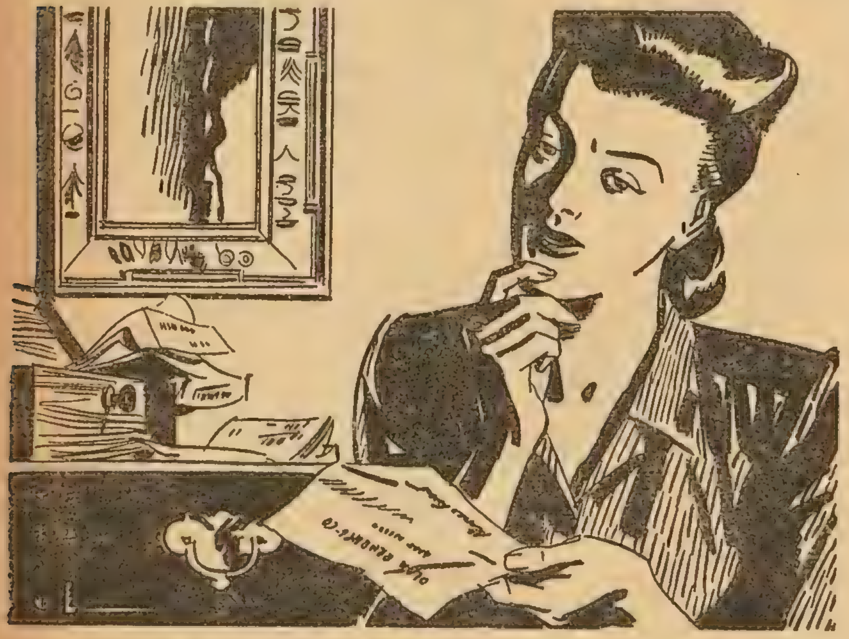
Margaret went home a week later, and that day a storm broke which kept the men ashore for several days. By then Joanna's larder was low and she was dispirited. But Alec was gay as usual.

After supper one evening he went out—to see Owen, he said. When he came in, late, he dropped thirty dollars into her lap.

"We're going ashore on a spree when the weather comes good, and I want you to look special. You've worn that old sweater and skirt long enough."

That night she knew that he was completely happy when he fell asleep, his face warm against her throat. He thought she was happy, too. But she lay awake for a long time, arms tight around him. It seemed to her as if she must hold him fast, protecting him. Against what, she didn't know.

The summer was like a long breath after the winter. The biggest debts were paid, and the fishing was good, so that they could order something new from the catalogue once in a while. Alec worked hard and long, came home to go to bed early and get up at daylight. Joanna and the rest of the women preserved wild strawberries, cooked their husbands' meals, and talked and dressed in fresh prints to go to the dances in the clubhouse on Saturday night.



Early in the fall Donna Bennett had to go ashore to see a doctor. At the very last minute Joanna went with her. Alec had two good days' hauling before she went, and made her take most of the money. He wanted her to go, he said; she deserved a little spree.

As the Aurora B went around the point, out of the harbor, Donna turned to Joanna with her gray-blue eyes shining, and said, "Your father and I think of Alec as one of our own boys. I couldn't have asked anyone better for you, Joanna."

Joanna, standing up against the mast in her trench coat and red beret, smiled and didn't answer. She knew she couldn't tell her mother the little fear that nagged her constantly, even when she was happiest with Alec.

She and her mother expected to go back to the Island next boat day, but a storm blew up. It was two weeks before any boat could make the trip across. Then Charles came to Brigport to sell his lobsters, and he took them home.

On the way, Joanna asked gaily, "Well, Cap'n Charles, what have you boys been doing in all this stormy weather?"

Charles grinned down at her. "Playing poker," he said candidly. "Longest poker game in the history of the Island. We played every damn night for almost two weeks."

Alec too? The words came to her lips, but she didn't say them. Instead, she said lightly, "What does Mateel say about it?"

"Nothing. She knows better. Besides, I get out when it goes too high. Family to support."

She looked squarely into his dark merry eyes. "Tell me something. Alec's been playing, hasn't he? How much has he lost?"

"Lost! Maybe a little at first, but then he got a winning streak. I never saw anything like it, Jo!"

Alec was on the pier to meet them. When they reached the house and came into the kitchen, his arms went suddenly and tightly around her again, holding her close against him. His face was taut and stern, his voice harsh. "My God, I've missed you, Jo. Don't ever go away like that again."

She felt tenderness flow over her. She shouldn't have left him. Without her he was a ship without a rudder. "No, I'll never go away from you again," she promised with passionate honesty. "Never. As long as I live."

He didn't want to go out to haul that afternoon, but Joanna hardened her heart and told him he must. "When was the last time you went out?" she demanded.

"You think I've been out in this williwaw we've been having?"

"That proves you can't afford to miss today," she said triumphantly. He tried to pull her down to his knee, but she wouldn't be pulled.

WHEN he had gone whistling down the path, she sat down at the desk. They needed heavy clothing and shoes right away. No use to take the money from Alec's hauls; and she didn't want to charge the things. There was nothing for it but to make up an order and pay for it in one fell swoop from the money box. There wouldn't be any new boat this winter, anyway.

She felt tired and dispirited as she took the box from the desk. This was no way to live, forever worrying about money, knowing that if you spent it on winter clothes, there'd probably be an emergency—some new part for the engine, new trap stuff after a storm, a sudden sickness.

Well, she would talk to Alec about his card-playing when he came home, she thought, as she opened the money box. She looked with some pride at the receipted bills, and lifted them out. There was nothing else in the box. There was not even a handful of change.

When Alec came home, she faced him. Her voice was chill.

"Alec, where's the money that should be in the box? Where's the money you won playing poker while I was gone?"

"I squared up some bills, and I got some new trap stuff. I lost almost a dozen traps in the storm."

"And how much money did you lose, before you started winning? Plenty, wasn't it? You gave me all you had in your pockets before I went away, so you took the boat money to play poker with, and lost every cent of it, didn't you?"

She walked up and down the kitchen. He stood by the stove watching her, rigid and straight. She stopped in front of him.

"Alec, it's coming winter and we haven't a cent. All you got today was enough to pay for your gas—you couldn't even get around the Island to haul because your engine broke down off Sou-west Point and you had to be towed in. And she's going to break down all winter, isn't she?"

"All I need is a new connecting rod—"

"You're always needing new connecting rods because you need a new engine. And how long does it take to put in a new connecting rod? It means you lose a day, doesn't it?" She began to pace again, too enraged to stand still. "And how are you going to send off for a new connecting rod when we haven't got any money? I suppose you can go out and win another poker game!"

He followed her, trying to turn her toward him. "I've never seen you like this before!"

"But I've felt like this, lots of times!" She faced him, shoulders rigid under his hands, head flung back. "Alec, don't you see that we can't live forever from hand to mouth? I've struggled and saved and got bills paid and the minute I turn my back you throw away enough money to dress us for the winter and buy what the boat needs and anything else we need in a hurry. Alec, can't I *trust* you?"

Her eyes searched his face, the face she had loved from the very beginning. Her lips had traced every line and bone in it, her hands had lain against his cheeks, and pushed his hair from his forehead; yet, as he looked at her, it was the face of a stranger. And she knew, with the terrible clarity her anger had given her, that she had read into that face something which wasn't there and would never be there: *strength.*

"You can't afford to play poker," she told him. "Not ever. Not every night for two weeks, not one night in two months. You can't afford to even touch a pack of cards, Alec Douglass, and you'd better burn the pack you've got in your pocket right now!"

"It happens that I cleaned out Owen and the rest last week. They're looking for their chance to win back."

"And they'll give you a chance to win back, and it'll keep up like that forever—maybe. Until the time comes when you have to choose between poker and me."

He was halfway to the door; instantly he turned and came back toward her, his eyes wide with furious unbelief. *"Joanna—"* He put out his hand, almost gropingly, and her heart quailed. But through her loving pity ran a bright ray of triumph. This, then, was it. There was something that would reach him.

She said, "I won't live like this forever."

He reached for her then and pulled her into his arms, buried his face against her hair. "You darling," he muttered. "Joanna—" She felt his quick hard breathing, and thought in sudden panic that he was crying.

She forced her head upward, her own eyes flooding, and caught his face between her hands as he said, still in that queer voice, "You sweet little brat, you know damn well you couldn't live without me!"

Alec went out laughing.

IN the bad spell that came in March, when the wind blew constantly for almost a month, day and night, and Joanna never left the house except to wander along the west side looking for wood, Alec was out almost every night. What he was playing with she didn't know, because he wasn't going out to haul and bringing in any money. And she didn't know with whom he was playing, either. Sometimes he said he was going to the clubhouse to play pool, and from the sitting room windows she could see the light among the trees. He usually didn't come home until long after she had gone to bed.

She had new shoes at last, though; sturdy stout shoes such as she had always worn in the Island winters. It was Nils who was responsible for that. She had seen little of Nils during the winter, until one night when she sat alone in the kitchen reading. He came in, as fresh and ruddy and yellow-haired as ever, except that his face was set in leaner, more mature lines. He brought two balls of marline with him. He wanted her to knit some trap heads for him, he said. His sister was too busy. He was so simple and unembarrassed about it that it was easy for Joanna to accept the job. After that, there were always trap heads to knit.

It took her two or three days, after her hands toughened up, to knit up a ball, and there was two dollars' worth of heads in it.

It was Nils who told her where Alec found his gambling partners these days.

"I noticed Alec in the clubhouse when I came up the lane," he said mildly. "He was playing pool with Ash and Simon."

The words caught her like a blow to the stomach. He must have seen a narrowing of her lids, a change of color. He said instantly, "I wouldn't think anything of it, Jo. They just dropped in, most likely."

"Most likely," she repeated. So there was no one else but Simon Bird and his brother who would play with Alec—none of her brothers or her friends . . .

She had wondered afterward if Nils were trying to warn her, somehow, thinking she could do something. But what was there to do? Could you catch the east wind and tie it in a sack? Could you keep Alec from going his own way? No more than the east wind.

April came and with it a day when Joanna decided to leave Alec. She had felt for a long time as if she were caught in a trap, and the steel jaws had tightened on her when she found out about the Birds. All the revulsion she had ever known for Simon was intensified now. And she couldn't live with a man who wanted to kiss her, to caress her and make love to her, but didn't want to listen to her when she tried to make him understand what was happening to them.

She would tell him all that when he came home tonight, and she would be cool, and dispassionate, and final, and tomorrow she would go away on the boat.

She lit a lamp in the kitchen and sat down to read until Alec came. Sometimes he stayed out all night, and came in with his face set against her, already on the defensive. It was curious how alone she felt as she sat there with her book in her lap. And as she waited here, in her own little world, she must have slept, for suddenly she was waking up with a start, her heart pounding, and Alec was coming through the door.

The lamplight was a sickly thing, with the spring dawn flushing the sky outside the windows. She sat up, rubbing her cramped neck, and her book dropped to the floor. The fire was out.

Without a word Alec went to the stove and began to put kindling into it. His face was a queer gray color, his eyes strange.

He got the fire going and put the teakettle on to heat. He seemed not to realize she was there. Joanna wondered how to begin to tell him about her decision. Perhaps she had better wait until he had coffee. He looked as if his head ached terribly.

She stood up and went over to the sink to wash the sleep out of her eyes.

"Joanna," he said, and the strangeness of his voice turned her around. He came toward her, so the light from the east window fell full upon his face, and she caught her breath. There were deep lines carved from his nostrils to the corners of his mouth. His words came from his throat with a harsh weariness. "I'm not playing poker any more. Not any game of cards."

He went back to the stove, took from his pocket the pack of cards he always carried and dropped them in. "I'm through, Joanna," he said.

"What's happened, Alec?" she asked him quietly.

"Turned over a new leaf, if you want to call it that. Let's have some breakfast. Then I'm going to bed for a few hours before I go out to haul."

"The boat's on the beach—"

"Where she always is, poor critter. I'll go out in the double-ender if I have to. *But I'm going to haul."*

He ate like a man starved, but his strangeness held, and Joanna couldn't speak. Somehow, there was nothing to say, not even the most casual remark, and all the things she had planned to say couldn't be said now. Not right away.

Breakfast over, Alec went upstairs. "Call me about half-past nine," he told her. "Looks like a good day to haul." The door shut behind him. Joanna, clearing the table, knew that whatever had happened she couldn't go away today. She would have to wait awhile, until she had things straight in her head again.

Alec never offered to tell Joanna what had happened that night, and she didn't ask him any questions. All that spring he worked hard, much harder than he had ever worked before. He came home to his dinner, handed over his entire receipts to her, and went down to the shore to work all afternoon on bait for the next day.

Once, in his arms, she whispered, "Alec, I'm so *proud* of you."

She saw for an instant the way his face changed, before he tightened his arms and crushed her head down against his shoulders. He kissed her neck, her cheek, her hair with a sudden desperate hardness, and then as suddenly let her go. He went out without another word. She kept remembering that strange look. It wasn't a happy thing.

When the June fog mull was over, Brigport celebrated with a supper and dance. Most of the Bennett's Islanders went across to it, but Joanna and Alec decided to stay home.

"Let's go for a long walk tonight and make believe that we're all alone in the world," Joanna said at noontime.

"You're the skipper, honey." He smiled at her. "Y'know, you're sort of blooming."

Joanna knew why. She could hardly wait, but tonight would be a better time to tell him. They would take a long walk in the clear June starlight, the way they used to walk when they were first married, and stop to rest above one of those little coves on the west side, where the sea would be so still they could see the stars shimmering in the dark water, and the woods would be black and listening behind them, and then she could tell him that she was positive about the baby.

She watched him go down the path after dinner, and heard his sweet sharp whistling. Will Ye No' Come Back Again? Her lips phrased the words, fitting them to the music:

"Better lo'ed ye'll never be. Will ye no' come
back again?"

In the late afternoon, she walked down to the shore to see why Alec hadn't come home yet to supper, and found him on the wharf, watching the boats leave the harbor for Brigport. Owen's boat was still on her mooring.

"I thought Owen was going," Joanna said.

"Sure he is. Only he's got a quart from somewhere this morning and I guess he is killing it. With Mark's kindly assistance."

Joanna tilted her head impatiently. "Leave them alone, Alec. Let them miss the supper. And if father catches Mark drunk—well, maybe that's what Mark needs."

"Tough little nut." Alec's hands gave her shoulders a loving shake. "You go along and get supper on the table and I'll round 'em up and get 'em under way." He leaned forward and kissed her swiftly. They went up through the dark shed, arm in arm, and parted by the store.

"Be along pretty soon!" he called back over his shoulder and swung along the path that led by the fishhouses to the beach. She waited a moment to watch him, wondering how she had ever thought he was weak. Well, he had been weak once, but that was a long time ago. Now his very walk showed the difference. He was like a slender steel blade, as straight and as strong, walking as if at last he was sure of himself and his place in the world.

A ground sparrow rose up fluttering from the Queen Anne's lace as Alec passed it. He watched its flight as he walked, his narrow alert head turned to burnished bronze in the slanting light. Some impulse made him stop and turn around. He saw Joanna standing there at the corner of the store and waved. It was like a salute.

As she turned toward home, she was aware of her passionate eagerness to tell him about the baby. She hoped it wouldn't take long to get the boys started. They didn't deserve to have someone caring about whether they missed the supper or not.

The long yellow light slanted into her kitchen and filled it with a warm and tranquil glow. There was hardly a sound in this hushed and peaceful hour; from outside the cow's bell sounded clear and sweet.

She sang to herself while she waited. One little tune stayed in her mind; she couldn't get rid of it:

"Better lo'ed ye'll never be. Will ye no' come
back again?"

Darling, will you hurry up? she pleaded soundlessly. And then he was coming through the gate. She ran to meet him at the door, and saw that it wasn't Alec coming up the path. It was Stevie. She sat down on the steps and thought, What is it now? On this night of nights, is Alec going to fool around half the evening?

STEVIE came toward her, tall and still carrying his teen-age gawkiness in his long arms and legs. He had on his best blue suit and a white shirt, but it looked funny. Stevie looked queer, too—almost as if he were afraid of her.

"Well, young Lochinvar," she said, "would you mind telling me if you know why my lord and master hasn't come home to his supper yet?"

Stevie didn't answer her. He came to the steps. And then she knew what was wrong with his suit. It was wet. Dripping.

"Have you been overboard?" she demanded, and even as she said it there was a constriction in the pit of her stomach, a sudden sickening tightness. Stevie's eyes clung to hers with a desperate pleading, and she said carefully, "Where's Alec?"

"He's dead."

Stevie's voice went on, uncertain, ready to break. "He was going to row us out to Owen's boat in his double-ender—Owen and Mark and me. We were almost out there, we were fooling, and—well, we capsized. I guess Alec—" His voice rose ludicrously. "He cracked his head on the side, and he—and he went right down, Jo! We got him up as soon as we could— Jo, there wasn't a soul —not a living soul around the harbor to help. They were all gone!"

He sat down on the steps, his head in his hands. Joanna put her hand on his shoulder, hardly knowing what she did. She seemed to feel nothing.

"I'm going to the beach, Stevie," she said. "Are you coming too?"

"Back there?" His eyes widened. Then he stood up. "Yes, I'm coming. The Coast Guard's bringing up a pulmotor and stuff. And Mark's doing that artificial respiration we learned in school."

Her heart pounded violently. "Then there's a chance—"

"Don't hope, Joanna," he said gently. "Don't look for a chance."

They walked without speaking to the boat shop where Alec had been taken. At the end over the water, where a window on the west side let in the red light of sunset, Alec lay face down on an old sprayhood spread on the floor in the midst of curled yellow shavings, and Mark was astride his back, counting in a toneless voice, swinging forward, pressing down, swinging back.

She moved where she could see Alec's face, turned from her. She knelt and looked down into it. His skin had been bronze, and now it was white against the dingy gray canvas. It was that, and the pallor of his lips, merry and mild even now, that told her he was gone.

She looked at Mark. "It's no good. Don't do it any more."

"I—won't—stop," he said between stiff lips.

The doors at the far end opened. White caps showed in the gloom, and a coast guard officer stepped out of the shadow of the boat and looked down at Alec. Joanna, on her knees, looked back at him. Then she leaned forward and kissed Alec's mouth.

That's one to sleep on, darling, she said to him without sound. She went away from Alec then.

THE family wanted her to come back to the big house and sleep again in her own small room. She would be the daughter of the house again; caught up in the whirlpool of activity, of argument and laughter, she wouldn't brood, they thought. But she wouldn't come. If you were a Bennett, you wanted to be decently alone with your troubles until you knew how to live with them. And she wasn't ready to tell them about the baby yet; she wished she need never tell anyone. Knowing she must go through the long wearisome pregnancy alone, and face the ultimate agony without Alec, knowing he would never see his child, she wished more than once that she could die, too.

But there was no chance of it with a strong healthy girl like herself. So she ate for the child's sake, and made herself sleep, and gave way only a few times to the wild passionate storms of grief that tried to sweep her away. Though she had no joy of the baby now, she couldn't forget her responsibility toward it.

She woke in the early dawn to lie there and think about Alec, going over and over their times together—every quarrel, every embrace, every joke. She would lie there quietly as the day crept into the room, with tears welling and falling as if they would never stop. But they were silent tears. She would wipe them away at last, and get up to begin her day. Nobody else knew about those tears. The Islanders shook their heads at her still-lipped poise.

The boys came by daily to see how she was, bringing some special dish down from the house, filling her water pails, splitting kindling. She was quieter than she had ever been, but she could still joke with them. She was carefully natural in her manner wherever she was, so that no one would show pity for her.

The fall came at last, sweeping down on the Island in the worst equinoctial gale the coast had seen for years. The crashing wind on the hill behind the house, the foam flying in the little cove, gave Joanna a strange comfort. She drew the curtains early that day and lighted a lamp, and sat down to sew. She had the radio in the kitchen, but she didn't touch it very often. The inner silence of the house didn't bother her. Rather, she cherished it.

Sometimes, even after almost three months, she thought she heard Alec's whistle outside, and then she would remember that it couldn't be Alec; but she had a feeling that something of him stayed in this house. So she wasn't afraid of solitude, nor of silence. A half hour passed. Through the unending roar of the wind and the crash of rain against the windows, she heard someone knocking at the door. She put her sewing out of sight before she went to answer, wondering who would knock—none of the family would. She opened the door.

IT was Simon Bird who stood in the entry in his dripping oilskins. She stared at him in surprise.

"I knew you was alone, and with this livin' gale o' wind, I thought you might kind of appreciate a caller." His slate-colored eyes smiled at her as he took off his sou'wester and hung it on a nail in the entry. "You ain't going to keep me standin' here while we talk, are ye?"

She stepped back, and he came forward to lean against the dresser. His dark-red hair gleamed like mahogany under the light; the bones in his narrow face were sharper than they used to be, his mouth thinner. His oilskins were new and shining brilliantly yellow. She remembered Alec had never been able to afford the new oilskins he'd wanted.

"It's kind of you, Simon, but you're wasting your time. The storm doesn't bother me. So thanks just the same." She waited in chill courtesy for him to go, but he didn't move. He opened the neck of his oil jacket and lighted a cigarette.

"Look, Jo, you got no call to be uppity to me or anybody. When you goin' to find out that it don't count much to be a Bennett nowadays? Or a Douglass? They ain't nobody but what don't know what Alec put you through last winter, and then left you without a cent."

"Will you please *get out of my house?"*

Simon laughed. "You can't tell me to get out of your house—because it ain't *quite* yours." He fumbled in his pocket and took out a billfold, opened it with maddening care. The words on the slip of paper he handed her danced before her eyes, then steadied. "PAY ON DEMAND . . . Simon Bird . . . five hundred sixty-five dollars" . . . and Alec's familiar gay scrawl at the bottom, striking at her as sharply as if she'd heard his voice.

"Poker," said Simon, with laughter behind his words. "I kept lendin' your fine husband money fast as he lost it. He was always waitin' for his luck to turn. It never did. 'Course you never knew he'd get in so deep he'd put up the house as security."

"The house?" The words scraped her throat.

"Yep. Then he was scared. Left off the poker and went to work. Thought he'd pay up everything and then he could start all over again."

"You're not fit to talk about him," said Joanna. There was a rod of steel where her backbone used to be. She would kill him if he didn't stop talking about Alec. "My father will pay you. I'll see him tomorrow."

"Don't matter to me who pays it," said Simon. "Just so it's paid soon. I got a use for it."

The door shut softly behind him. And with him went all Joanna's feeling for the house, all the happy memories it had held of Alec. She waited an hour and then she walked through the black wildness of the storm, home to her family. She'd found out, she told them, that Simon held a note on the house. He needed the money. She couldn't pay it, and she no longer wanted the house. The boys could help her get her things out.

"I feel sort of funny," she said hesitantly, "walking in now instead of coming when you wanted me."

"When we wanted you!" exclaimed her mother. "Don't you think we've always wanted you here where we could keep an eye on you?"

Joanna took a long breath. "Well, it's not just me you've got to keep an eye on."

Her mother smiled. "I was wondering when you'd get ready to tell us."

Shortly after Christmas, Simon Bird left the Island. No one seemed to know of his whereabouts. But it wasn't long before Joanna had her last contact with him—a strangely roundabout contact. There was a letter from a Boston lawyer. Simon wanted payment on the house right away. He was paid, even though it was a bad winter. The Bennetts dug deep into their pockets, and Stephen finished up an already depleted bank account. Joanna protested, but, even though her father knew she would never get back to that house, he insisted on wiping out the debt.

As if she had been patiently and considerately waiting for this matter to be disposed of, Joanna's daughter was born the day after the receipt came.

On a windless day in early February, Joanna was alone in the kitchen, with Ellen Douglass asleep in her basket. She ironed minute dresses and gertrudes, and was surprised at her own quiet content. There had been a tortured period when she'd never expected to feel like this again—if indeed she'd ever felt like this. Peace after pain—the heart's pain and the body's pain—had a different texture. It must always be tinged with sadness, but it is overlaid with a deep thankfulness that the edge of grief has been blunted a little at last.

She caught herself humming as she worked. Looking down toward the harbor, she saw the village around the shore, its windows silver in the sun; the harbor was silver, too—liquid, living silver, never quiet, forever flashing.

Someone was coming through the gate. She narrowed her eyes against the glare, wondering which of the men was back from hauling so early. It was not until he was almost up to the house that she saw it was Nils.

He came in quietly, as he always did. "Hi, Jo."

"Hello, Nils. How's everything?"

He laid his cap down on the dresser and walked across to Ellen's basket. "I suppose you mean lobsters when you say how's everything. Well, they're less and less." He leaned over the basket and said in interested surprise, "Hey, she's awake! Hi, Ellen. Is she old enough to smile yet? She just did. I'll bet she knows me."

As Joanna leaned over the basket with him, he looked at her with eyes that suddenly deepened to color; his face was intensely serious.

He said abruptly, "Joanna, what are you going to do? Are you staying here or planning on a job?"

That was her problem. How could she expect her father to feed and clothe her and Ellen, to pay for Ellen's schooling? He wanted to, but it wasn't his responsibility.

"I don't know," she said slowly. "Nils, I don't know. My mother needs me here right now, but the boys will be marrying and having their own homes, and there'll be less and less for me to do."

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about." Gently he freed his finger from the baby's clasp and straightened up. "Jo, I'm no good at talking. What I want to know is—when things get straightened around—if you'd think about marrying me."

She said slowly, "Nils, are you still in love with me?"

"I'm still in love with you. And if you ever married me, I'd want you to make it the kind of marriage you wanted it to be." A slight flush ran up under his skin. "I know there'd never be anybody else for you like Alec. That you'd think of that way. You wouldn't ever have to worry." The flush deepened, and his cool straightforward voice was suddenly husky. "But Jo, if you'd let me look out for you and Ellen—well, that's all I want."

Joanna looked into his eyes and they looked steadily back at her. She felt humble suddenly.

"Listen, Nils, you deserve somebody who—well, for her there'd never be another man like you, no matter what happened."

Nils' mouth twisted in a little grin. "What if I'm one of those one-woman guys? 'Twould be kind of a nuisance, being married to a woman who was crazy about me, and I didn't care much about her."

Joanna shook her head. "Nils, there'll never be another Alec for me, and if I couldn't bring a man anything more than just being friends, I wouldn't want to marry him."

He picked up his cap from the dresser. "I thought in a couple of years we'd both be pretty lonesome sometimes—this Island can be damn lonesome." He stopped at the door and looked back at her. "I love that little mite," he said in a level voice, "because she looks the way I always thought ours would look—yours and mine. So long, Jo."

Two weeks later, Joanna was standing on the front doorstep shaking rag rugs briskly into the wind, and wondering if it was really spring in the air, or only the way the February thaw always smelled, when she saw Nils walking swiftly toward the house.

She waited for him, and they went in together. He had come to tell her father and mother that he was leaving the Island. He hadn't decided what he would do, but he'd find something very soon. Work on a tanker or a freighter, maybe; he'd see some of those places he'd heard his grandfather tell about, from his days at sea.

If it was a shock to Stephen and Donna, it was more than that for Joanna. She sat rigidly still, her coffee untouched, and looked at him as if he were a stranger. Nils, leaving the Island. His roots here were as deep as hers—how could he bear to pull them up in this cold, matter-of-fact way, to leave his boat, to walk out?

It's not because of me, she thought. I'm not that important. Nils always knew how to put first things first. It's because he's lost faith in the Island, she thought. But I never thought he'd lose faith in it.

She watched him unbelievingly, and once he looked directly at her; his blue eyes stayed on hers for a moment, and she saw there no answer at all to her unbelief.

So Nils left Bennett's Island.

No one but Joanna knew the real reason for his leaving. To the rest of the Islanders, it was merely a shrewd decision by a man of sound ideas. The notion that lobsters would never again go up to a price that would yield better than a meager living to Bennett's Islanders began to be echoed around. Even the older men talked of leaving. When, in late summer, the storekeeper had to refuse credit, the exodus began.

By spring the Bennett boys had all gone. In June, Pete Grant closed up his store. And at last Stephen Bennett had to give up. He held on through the summer, with Donna and Joanna to help. Then one windy evening the old boat shop caught fire.

There weren't enough people left on Bennett's Island to stop such a blaze. The tindery old structure finally crashed in a shower of sparks, and not one of Stephen Bennett's two hundred and fifty traps was saved.

If he were a young man, and unmarried, Stephen said, he could fight it out and build up again from the very beginning. But no matter what good soldiers his womenfolk were, he couldn't make them face it—they had gone through enough with him already. They would go where the boys were; there'd be some sort of work he could get.

The Island lay long and dark under a threatening sky on the day they left. Long and dark and alone—and betrayed, Joanna thought, standing in the stern of the mailboat and looking back for as long as she could.

ON a day long afterward Joanna stood alone on the wharf of Bennett's Island. Her hands were thrust into the pockets of her shabby suit jacket, her neck rose slim and strong and brown from the open collar of her blouse. There was a wing of too early whiteness in her hair, but she had kept a young girl's slenderness. She held her head high. She was listening. Watching.

Her eyes tried to see everything at once. There lay the Island; entering the harbor, you were in its arms. She'd always thought that, ever since she could first remember. How strange the harbor was now, like a blue bowl filled to brimming, the water hardly murmuring as it moved against the rocks. Strange and dreamlike . . .

There were no boats at the moorings, no faint click of oarlocks across the harbor as a dory came out from the beach.

Even the gulls were hushed in this hushed place, where the buildings stood locked and boarded-up along the shore, knee-deep in beach peas and evening primrose. The houses stood desolate against the woods, their gardens gone wild and full of birdsong now that there was no one to frighten the singers. The windows were blank and unseeing; yet, curiously, they stared at her. Bennett's Island was a desert island now, forgotten and scorned save by the woman whose footsteps sounded so strange in the emptiness.

Joanna Bennett had come home.

It was queer how the smell of fish clung to the old shed on the wharf. She walked among the old hogsheads that had been such a torment to her curiosity in the days when her head barely reached the tops and she couldn't see what fascinating and pungent treasures they contained. Now, though she knew they were empty, she couldn't resist stopping to look, and then went on, grinning a small grin at herself. It felt good. Her face had been quiet and unsmiling for so long.

She came out by the store and followed the road to the old Bennett house. She walked through the gateposts, bleached to silver. Her heart was swelling until it was too big, until it was stopping her breath, and making her throat ache. At this moment she knew the full stature of her loneliness.

They're all gone, she said to herself. You know where they are, why they're not here. You know which are dead, and why the others will never come back. You knew before you came. But you came, didn't you? *You're home.*

Somehow she forced her feet onward through the tangled grass, dreading to come to the house and its irrevocable solitude, yet driven. She looked around her with strained and desperate eyes, as if seeking a sign. She sat down on the stone doorstep, the white rose bush trailing above her.

At last she stood up and stretched her cramped arms. She stepped out of the cool shadow into the sunshine, and it was kind to her lifted face. She felt tired, as if she had come a very long way and nothing mattered now but rest.

She supposed she must eat; she'd go down into Goose Cove and eat the lunch she had brought. She started to walk down to the beach. And then she stood still, her heartbeat seeming to shake her body. Traps on the beach, new traps. A little double-ender pulled up above the water's edge. A man was sitting on his heels painting a buoy. She hardly breathed as she walked down over the slope. The grass muffled her feet. She reached the pebbles and went across them. Even before the man turned his head and saw her, she knew it was Nils.

They stood looking at each other. She put out her hand. His own closed around it, and a smile that began in his deepset blue eyes reached his mouth.

"Hi, Jo."

"It's been a long time, Nils."

"Six years." He added, "Ellen must go to school now."

"First grade," Joanna said. Sensation began to creep back into the numbness of surprise and shock. Her voice gathered color. "Nils, where did you go when you left the Island? And how long have you been back here?"

"I've been everywhere, just about, Jo. And I came back in April, back to our old place." His smile deepened. "Couldn't miss the spring crawl. I've been doing well, too, hauling from a double-ender. The cove here's a mite smaller than the harbor—lots less lonesome anyway."

Joanna said with a suddenly shaky laugh, "I don't know what to say—I—"

"Don't say anything. Sit down." With those few words she knew Nils was exactly the same. He'd grown older, and he'd been around the world. But he was still Nils. She realized with a great upsurge of gladness that he hadn't lost faith in the Island. It had called him back, and he had come to it. Sitting there on a warm rock in the sun, watching him as he went back to his painting, she had a curious delight.

WHEN he had finished the buoy, he came and sat down beside her, taking out his cigarettes. "I'm sorry about your father," he said at last. "I didn't find out till I landed in Port George last March—my father told me."

She said, "It was queer. We always worried about mother's health and never about him. It was as if leaving the Island broke his heart. As if he couldn't live anywhere else. He died before we'd been gone a year."

Nils watched her steadily. "What about you?"

"I went to work. We live with Charles and Mateel—mother and Ellen and I." She looked down at her firm strong hands. "I've cut the heads off more herring than I ever knew existed, Nils."

"Sardine factory, huh? Like it?"

"There were the boats coming in all the time, and the harbor. It was the sea, after a fashion." She could talk to Nils about this. No one else had ever known or even guessed. She had been a good actress. "But I felt like a wild gull shut in a cage. Then I got so I could stop thinking about it, but sometimes a little thing would bring it all back again."

"What brought you out here?"

"Yesterday I was going home from work and two men came around a corner in the dusk, talking, and I heard just one word—*'Bennett's.'* "

"I saw it on a chart," said Nils briefly. "It rose right up and hit me in the face—same thing, I guess. What then?"

"They were coming out by here in their dragger today. I knew them, because the boys knew them. So I spoke to them and they let me come along. They'll stop and take me back."

Nils turned his head and looked long and hard at her. "Jo, are you glad you ran away?"

"Glad!" For a panicky instant she thought she was going to cry. She said, very carefully, "Nils, what made me run away? Why didn't I just stay over there and figure that it was best not to come back here and make myself miserable?"

"You had to run away because it was stronger than you were, Jo," Nils answered her. "And maybe there was something in you that knew the Island wasn't alone any more. Jo, it'll never be alone as long as it's above water. When I went away, I knew I'd be back sometime. And there'll be others coming here, too—maybe not the same ones, but there'll always be people here."

He paused, his brows drawn in thought as he watched the shimmer of high tide in the cove. "Jo, the people who came out here and settled when there wasn't anything here—your grandfather and mine and the other old-timers—they were like the folks who settled this country. They wanted to make something big out of it, so they put everything they had into it. That was why the Island meant so much to them. That was why your father couldn't live away from it. The others, they came afterward when they began to hear about the Island. They came for what they could get, they took it, they didn't give anything back, and then they walked out on it."

She listened, her breathing light and quick. He went on talking in the slow quiet voice she'd always known.

"Jo, I used to think about the Island in the damnedest places. Calcutta, Liverpool, Rio. In the hot countries it was like a vision, you'd call it—always in my head. The wind and the woods, the sound of the water on the rocks, and the feel of a gaff grabbing a toggle. Then I came back, and it was just the way I remembered it, without the people, of course. So then I did a different kind of thinking. And when I saw you coming across the beach today, I knew my thinking'd been right."

He stopped and watched his cigarette as he knocked the ashes from it. "Maybe I've been wrong all this time, Jo. It's for you to tell me. But I've been wondering if maybe out of all the folks who've belonged to the Island there were any special ones who were supposed to lead the way. Building up again, starting from scratch the way your grandfather did. And it seemed to me that if I was right, they'd show up out here—be the first ones to come back. Well, here I am. And here you are."

Their eyes held for a long moment before he said, in his unhurried way, "Jo, when I talked to you the last time, I never said I wouldn't ask you again. But it's like it'd been planned out without us knowing about it." His smile flickered up warmly. "A man gets to thinking a lot of strange stuff when he's alone with just the wind for company. . . . Joanna, what kind of a life do you think we could have together out here, helping the Island start all over again?"

She looked out at the sea, and Nils said, "Ellen would be here, too. Joanna, everything I said that other time about making it the kind of marriage you wanted it to be—that still goes. But we'd make a good partnership out of it. We've a mighty lot of work to do, and the best way we can do it is together."

"Together," she repeated. Nils was right and it was meant to be like this. Maybe you had to go through just so much, and then you reached the place where you were supposed to be.

She looked up at the trees marching over the slope to the cemetery in the woods. It was seven years that Alec had been dead. When she had felt him slipping away from her, retreating farther and farther into memory out of reality, she had tried desperately to keep him close, but there was no holding him.

IN the years gone by she had wondered about Nils, if he were alive or dead, if he ever thought about the Island, if he ever thought about her. A great and almost suffocating gladness had welled up in her when she realized that it was no stranger on the beach, but Nils.

She said in the clear confident voice of the young Joanna Bennett, "Nils, will you go back with me tonight, and see the family? And Ellen?"

There was a question in the way he glanced at her, without speaking, and she answered it swiftly and directly.

"We'll make it a good partnership, Nils. The way you said we could. And we'll make it the kind of marriage we both want."

He didn't touch her. But the look in his eyes was a caress, as if he'd taken her in his arms and kissed her. Then he went back across the beach to his paint and his buoys.

Joanna took off her jacket and rolled back her blouse sleeves. "Nils," she called to him, "I'm going back up the meadow and get my lunch box—there's plenty for both of us. Be right back!"

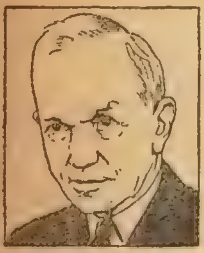
She felt tranquillity flooding through her, a great high tide of content, a noontide richness of peace. She stood without moving, and let it take possession of her.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By JOSEPH ANTHONY

J. R. PERKINS, a newcomer to the ranks of historical novelists, has set himself an ambitious task in **The Emperor's Physician**—a realistic picture, in sharp focus, of the troubled world of Syria and Judea in the era of Jesus of Nazareth.


J. R. Perkins

The Emperor's Physician is an account of two journeys, a physical and a spiritual one. The matter-of-fact part of the trip is a mission to study health conditions in the eastern outposts of the empire of Tiberius Caesar. Sergius Cumanus, the Emperor's physician, and his colleague, Luke Galen, are jointly entrusted with this assignment.

Time after time, the tough-minded Sergius Cumanus, witnessing the work of the Healer, is able to attribute it, with a fair show of logic, to clever manipulation or to natural causes. The final episode, for which he can find no answer in his logic or his Aesculapian lore, is uncommonly good writing.

Published by the Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, Ind. Price, $2.50.

AFTER years of glib talk about the alleged decadence of France, the other side of the story is beginning to be told. **Joseph Kessel** has done a great service to his country and to the world at large by his stirring account of the French resistance movement, **Army of Shadows.**

There is physical adventure enough for half a dozen Hollywood epics in this account of anonymous heroism, hairbreadth escapes, and magnificent sacrifice. But the most thrilling part of it all is the realization that the supposedly enervated, dehumanized France about which we have been hearing so long was just another nightmare dreamed up for us by the accomplished Dr. Goebbels. Kessel was himself an active member of the underground movement for three years, until he escaped to London, one jump ahead of the Gestapo. He tells a story that is one of the proudest chapters in the history of France.

Published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., N. Y. Price $2.

MAYBE the reason why the Japanese mentality has seemed inscrutable is that those Occidentals who were in a position to do the scrutinizing were more interested in golf, bridge, and the gossip of the Tokyo diplomatic set. A notable exception is **John Morris**, an Englishman who went to Japan as a language teacher in 1938. He hobnobbed with the Japanese, studying their language and customs. In **A Traveller from Tokyo**, he strips a lot of mystical wrappings away from their government, their educational system, their army, and their national character.

John Morris

The Japanese Foreign Office, optimistically believing that Morris could be groomed as a second Lord Haw-Haw, permitted him to remain in his home in Tokyo for seven months after Pearl Harbor. He made the most of this opportunity.

Morris was an eyewitness of the Doolittle raid. The first reaction of the Japs, he tells, was one of anger against the army, which had said that the defenses of Tokyo were impregnable. Thereupon the warlords chose a typically Japanese method of restoring public confidence—they staged a phony follow-up raid, and triumphantly announced that it had been "driven off before it was able to penetrate even the outer defenses."

Published by Sheridan House, Inc., N. Y. Price, $2.75.

COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE

HORIZONTAL

1 Pease
5 Glass eyes for the Admiral
14 The this with Hitler
15 What it's impolite to do in front of Mrs. Snootschnozz at table
16 She wolf
17 Italian river
18 Alpha Lambda Pi Eta Alpha
19 Lake containing a state
20 Hay fellers
22 Make the unkindest cut of all
24 It gets the breaks among the younger set
25 Silly fliers
26 Los Alpos
29 No complainer about the mate shortage, she (abbr.)
30 The grass course
34 It's had a spotty career among gamblers
35 Radical in the Union League (abbr.)
36 That Magnificent Hunk of Man
37 The girl sweet as apple cider
38 This should be rationed before election day
40 Resting backward
41 Screw up the puss for a photograph
43 Swear word
44 This is close to many a man's heart
45 Lincoln Highway's grampaw
46 Kind of Haven
47 Man who won't buy War Bonds
48 He made quite a prophet
50 What grammaw said grampaw was in his ways
51 Most mellow
54 Ozark grammaw's chawin' gum
57 Abie, to his Irish Rose
58 This is pretty clear to us, but—
60 —This is clear as mud
61 Gains a livelihood (Basic Brooklyn)
62 Social registered smell
63 The Roman way
64 After a midnight supper of lobster mayonnaise, what?
65 Every hour on the hour, and every half and quarter hour too—

VERTICAL

1 Bathing cap, ham sandwich, magazine, and face cream salesman
2 Prue, mixed up in a South American way
3 Safe things babies swallow
4 Acted villainously
5 He scratched one Flattop single-handedly
6 Rubber fish
7 A place for baby
8 Talks back
9 Good thing for a gal to keep in
10 Fall off the diet in a stuffy way
11 Kind of rubber around S. A. with a guay
12 Backward, turn backward, O Time!
13 Der Graf in Davy Chones' locker
21 XXXXXX (pl.)
23 A "What-I-Did-on-My-Summer-Vacation"
25 Musical ruts
27 This has a low point value
28 Here's where they put on an act
29 Part of a million I expect to get
31 It took a lot of pluck to play 'em
32 Hard thing to do in the morning
33 Ocean whippets
35 Rapidly disappearing type of transportation
36 Make a catty remark
38 Any Suth'n woman
39 When to do it
42 Do not eat this when eating pie (2 wds.)
44 The A B C of modern living
46 A 7—50=what?
47 A lot of bodies with no head
49 Allah's world
50 It takes a jerk to make these
51 Lovers' lamp
52 A few words from a Dictator
53 Kind of bed Lincoln slept in
54 What Hamlet found out of joint
55 Quote and unquote
56 Most important thing in a Liberator
59 Mythical bird, flying backward

U	S	H	E	R	■	B	R	A	D	L	E	Y
S	C	A	L	E	■	R	O	M	A	I	N	E
E	R	■	M	A	L	O	N	E	Y	■	T	A
D	O	S	■	R	E	A	D	S	■	M	R	S
C	O	P	S	■	A	D	O	■	H	O	Y	T
A	G	E	L	E	S	S	■	T	O	N	■	■
R	E	C	I	P	E	■	R	E	M	I	S	S
■	■	I	C	H	■	P	O	L	E	T	T	I
S	E	E	K	■	P	E	A	■	S	O	R	E
O	P	S	■	B	E	L	C	H	■	R	E	S
R	O	■	W	E	A	T	H	E	R	■	E	T
A	D	V	A	N	C	E	■	M	A	L	T	A
B	E	A	R	D	E	D	■	S	W	I	S	S

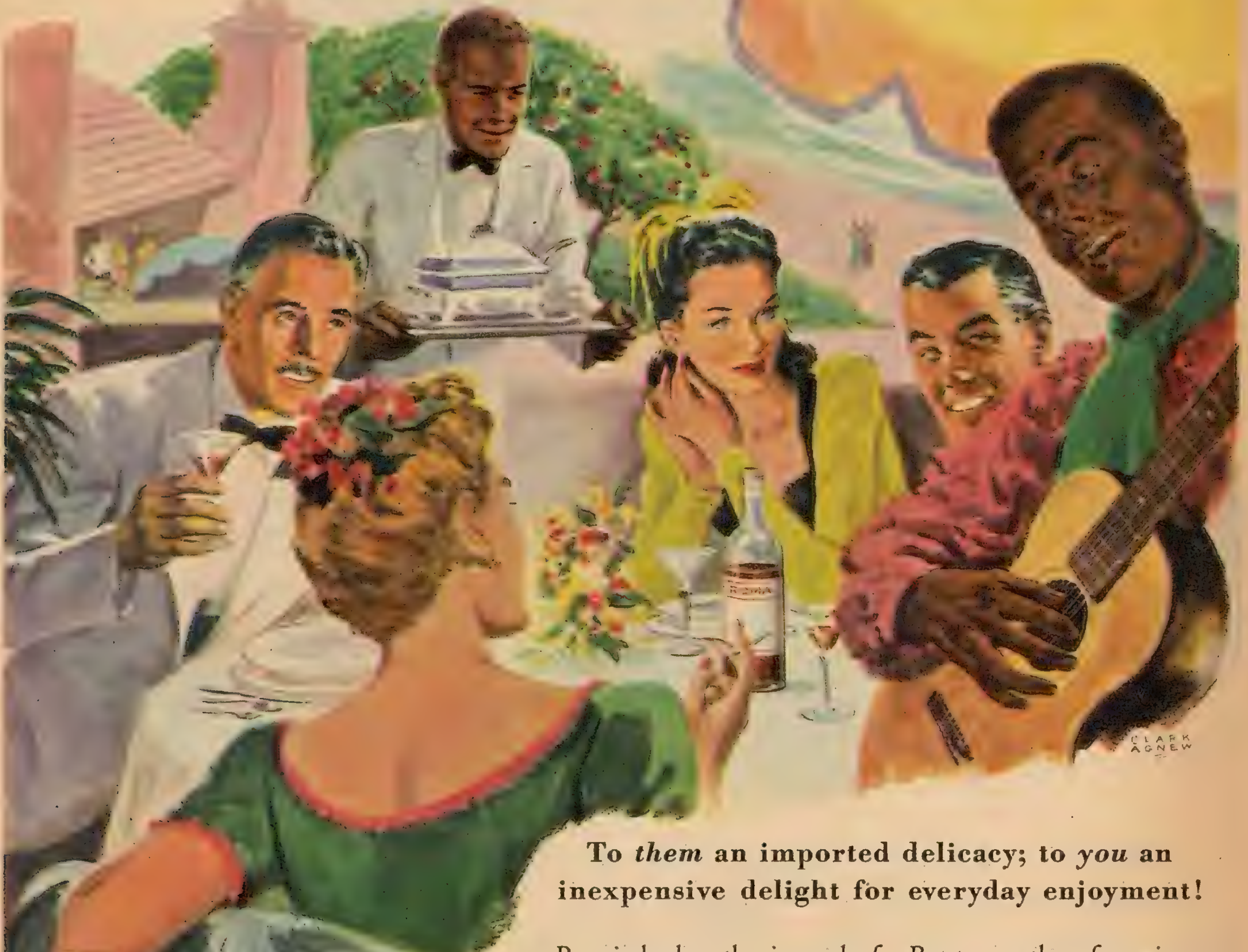
Last week's answer

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
17				■	18					■	19			
20				21			■	22		23				
	■	■	24			■	25					■	■	■
26	27	28			■	29			■	30		31	32	33
34				■	35			■	36					
37			■	38				39			■	40		
41			42			■	43			■	44			
45					■	46			■	47				
■	■	■	48		49			■	50			■	■	
51	52	53					■	54				55	56	
57				■	58		59			■	60			
61				■	62					■	63			
64										■	65			

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

BERMUDA PICTURE—BUT ROMA WINE!

Made in California for enjoyment throughout the world



To *them* an imported delicacy; to *you* an inexpensive delight for everyday enjoyment!

Rare, indeed, are the vineyards of the world which produce wines so fine that many countries *import* them. Among such richly-blessed vineyards are those in our own California from which come ROMA Wines.

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ROMA WINE COMPANY, Fresno, Lodi, Healdsburg, California

ROMA *Wines*

America's Largest Selling Wines

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Vintners' Select
CALIFORNIA
SHERRY

AT THE

Coral Beach and Tennis Club

ROMA California Wine is a fitting prelude to a superb dinner

ROMA California Wines include: Port, Sherry, Muscatel... Sauterne... Claret, Burgundy, Zinfandel, Champagne and Sparkling Burgundy.

***BUT* — BEFORE YOU BUY WINES—BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS**

Serve Chilled

TUNE IN ROMA WINES' "SUSPENSE" *C.B.S. Thursday nights (Mondays, in Pacific Time Zone). See your newspaper for time and station.*

GOODSPEED'S GAMBIT

Continued from Page 33

I appeared. "What's Goodspeed waiting for?" he demanded.

The colonel was a good soldier and a brave man, but whenever he uttered Goodspeed's name it was on a note of anxiety, not to say outright fear. So I was not the only one.

I said, "I don't know, sir. When I left, he was all ready to cross and blow up the bridge. Hasn't he—"

He handed me the glasses. "No, he hasn't! Have a good look. Maybe you can make out what he's up to!"

THEY were good glasses; they brought the farmhouse leaping closer—the flashes and smoke of the firing, the bare undamaged bridge, and the few shapes huddled on the approach to its northern end that must have been dead Germans. They were good glasses, but the best glasses in the world could not have revealed what it was that kept John Goodspeed in his improvised fortress, denying the Germans access to the bridge, to be sure, but at the same time contravening his own orders to destroy it.

"One of those crackbrained schemes of his!" the colonel exploded. "You see what's come of it? He's delayed so long that he can't carry out his orders without sacrificing three quarters of his men! Some idiotic notion of making a heroic stand, I suppose."

I said nothing. Goodspeed had talked of a poem in the Reader about Horatius.

"—or setting a trap for the Germans! Well, he's done it now! He's in the trap himself, and he can't get out! He wanted to make the Germans pay admission, and they've got him locked in the box office!"

At times in the past I had chuckled at Goodspeed's irrepressible inventiveness, his flair for the dashing, and his impatience. But I was not tempted to chuckle now. Even without the indications that Colonel Ames gave me, I could have seen that Goodspeed had got himself and his forty men into an ugly mess—one that could serve no useful purpose and for which he could offer no valid excuse. Someone else must blow up the bridge he had neglected to destroy, and before that was done, the whole regiment might have to suffer for his irresponsible conduct. Viewed from that terrace, with the colonel's level voice in my ears, and the memory of his set face, it was not amusing. My former opinion of Goodspeed had been too indulgent.

* * *

It is said that a man is known by the company he keeps. But we'd like to know if a good man keeps company with a bad man, is the good man bad because he keeps company with the bad man, or is the bad man good because he keeps company with the good man?

* * *

"Look there!" said the colonel, as if he had been reading my thoughts. He gave me the binoculars again. "Do you think he's fit for a command?"

The Germans—I gave them grudging credit—had been quick to understand Goodspeed's predicament. What Colonel Ames wanted me to watch was their attack on the farmhouse. From those bodies I had already seen huddled on the approach to the bridge, this must be their second attempt, but they were in no hurry. They had plenty of time, and now they directed their attention to the farmhouse, not to the bridge. Once they had reduced Goodspeed's stronghold, the bridge would be theirs, and in effect it was theirs already. To make that quite clear, they lobbed a few shells over to our bank of the river, as a reminder that any attempt to relieve or reinforce Goodspeed would be costly in lives, that we had had our chance to blow up the bridge and had missed it. Now they would call the tune.

They took their time. There must have been a full company engaged, and only veterans would have made every ridge and wrinkle of the ground tell in their favor as they did. Colonel Ames groaned a little, watching that sure advance. To make it worse, the fire from the farmhouse faltered and slackened, and one after another the guns fell silent there. On the other hand, the German fire redoubled, with the effect of mounting confidence. I caught myself holding my breath. Suddenly the ground all about the farmhouse, and closer than I had anticipated, was alive with tiny field-gray figures, all running toward the same objective.

It happened so quickly that I could not grasp the full meaning at once. The sudden blaze of fire shrouded the farmhouse and its surroundings with smoke. When that lifted, the field-gray figures were still there, most of them, but not running now, not moving at all, except convulsively. "Lord!" said the colonel, and his mouth stayed open. "They walked into it that time!"

I should have known, having helped to assemble it, that Goodspeed had disposed that murderous fire power, but I was as astonished as the Germans must have been. Goodspeed had won a breathing spell and a general increase in respect. No doubt the Germans were ready to concede, as we did, that they had been partially mistaken, and that he was not quite done yet.

And yet the very success of his stratagem told most heavily against him and made the final result even more inevitable than it had been from the beginning. He had swept away a company, but only to bring down upon himself a full regiment. From where we stood, the stir in and behind the German lines was purposeful and not to be mistaken. The farmhouse became the hub of a wider circle, contracting more slowly but even more inexorably than its predecessor. This time they were going to make very sure! Their guns opened up, and part of the wall about Goodspeed's courtyard went down in rubble and dust. They had stopped throwing shells across to our side of the river.

CERTAINLY, I reflected, John Goodspeed was getting that full measure of attention he had bespoken for himself in his character as Horatius! What had he said? "I don't see how even his enemies would have eyes for anything else."

You know that queer, creepy, tingling feeling when an idea is just coming to birth, when you can guess at its implications but cannot yet fill in its details? It was so with me just then, but the idea was not mine. It was Goodspeed's, and a more perceptive man, or a bolder man, might have taken up this fosterling much sooner than I. Goodspeed could not have been more explicit without involving me in responsibility for the scheme. Why, the very quotation from him I had just recalled should have been indication enough! Goodspeed never wanted the spotlight directed upon himself; if he spoke of taking up all the enemy's attention, it was to remind me that that attention could not be directed upon two objects at the same time.

The picture was coming clear now, with all the force of sudden revelation. I blush to recall that, with my mouth opening and shutting like that of a fish, I plucked at the colonel's sleeve. "Colonel!" I said. "Colonel Ames! Listen, sir!"

The colonel shook my hand off. He said, "Shut up!"

"But, Colonel, please! This is—"

"Shut up, I tell you, or I'll—I'll— Shut up! It isn't only the one regiment he's engaging; they've got at least two more they're ready and willing to throw in!

(Continued on page 54)

Irwin Caplan

"You're almost as welcome as a letter from home."

She's even prettier awake! Because she really *rests* while she sleeps—on her *Beautyrest* mattress! A rest she's *earned*, with a full day at the office, plus some after-hours as nurses' aide. (Our country needs after-hours war effort from all of us.) If *you* own a Beautyrest, you're lucky. Take good care of those 837 individually pocketed coils, that sag-proof border, those busy little ventilators that keep it clean and fresh! Simmons Company is deep in war production and don't know when they will be able to make Beautyrest again. Meanwhile, if you need a *new* mattress see about WHITE KNIGHT. It's the mattress-within-a-mattress, with layer upon layer of fine, resilient cotton! Tops in wartime buys at $39.50! And here's NEWS—Beautyrest Box Springs are available in limited quantities at $39.50 each!

BEAUTYREST—The World's Most Comfortable Mattress!

P. S. DID YOU BUY AN EXTRA WAR BOND THIS WEEK?

(Continued from page 52)

They're all watching the farmhouse, and nothing else. That setback when he wiped out a company has got their blood up, and I don't wonder. They stand to win the bridge, but I'll bet that's not what they're thinking about! It's that madman, Goodspeed, and—"

"And the rest of us might as well not be here at all!" I broke in. "We haven't made any move to help him, so they think we're too weak to try, or else they've forgotten all about us. I'll swear that's what Goodspeed had in mind, sir—to make them concentrate on him and forget the rest of us! He wouldn't have disobeyed orders just on a whim, and he doesn't go in for heroics for their own sake. If the same idea strikes us both at the same time, there's bound to be something in it, isn't there? We're not both subject to hallucinations, sir!"

"Thanks!" said the colonel. He was recovering his composure, though it would not have passed for composure at any other time. "But—did Goodspeed hint to you that—?"

"Not in so many words. I think he wanted to take the full risk, in case nothing came of his plan."

"That's possible, and he's certainly taking it! But to do us any good, he's got to take more than a risk! He's got to take terrific punishment, and go on taking it until an hour or so after full darkness, at least. What about that? But no, damn it all, it isn't fair to leave it up to you!"

For a moment the colonel stood in silence, staring at the flashes of the firing from that tiny beleaguered farmhouse. Then he laughed on an odd, jerky note. "Well, if he can take a chance, so can we! Let's go!"

THE hill hid our preparations from the view of the Germans. I had relatively little to do with those preparations myself. My orders were to hold my men in readiness to attack across the bridge when I heard the fighting move back up our way from the west. Since everything depended upon surprise, there would be no preliminary bombardment. The colonel planned to force a crossing of the river two miles below our bridge and fight his way back on the north bank. When this threat had forced the Germans to face about to meet it, I was to send the tanks in across the bridge, and follow with the infantry.

For the rest, we put our trust in Goodspeed's old doctrine of audacity and surprise.

Just before he left, Colonel Ames called me in, and he was frowning. "I told you to wait until you heard us approaching," he said. "But I want to qualify that. Don't wait longer than two hours—ten o'clock. If you haven't heard from us by then, attack without us and do the best you can on your own. Get some relief to Goodspeed anyway, and if you have to retreat, take him with you. That's all, except good luck!"

I could well understand the colonel's evident anxiety. In any night fighting, the element of chance is bound to be great. We ran that risk, and with only a hasty improvised plan of attack to go upon. But chief among our many uncertainties was the question of how long John Goodspeed and his handful could hold out. If the Germans took the farmhouse first, half our advantage would be lost. Undoubtedly Goodspeed would do his utmost for us, but he had no assurance that we were coming to sustain him. We had to put our faith in him, as well as in his doctrine. It seemed to me that the fighting, when it came, would be the easiest part of our task.

WE waited in the shelter of the hill, and I do not remember any darker night. A dozen times I put my watch up to my ear, and each time its calm ticking mocked me. Just as often I held my breath in the conviction that the firing at the farmhouse had died away, and just as often it began once more, rising to a pitch of exasperation and dying away to scarcely more than a sullen mutter.

Then I frightened myself with the thought that the Germans might despair of taking that place and withdraw their troops before we could strike them in the flank and rear. The hands of my watch crawled to half past nine and a quarter to ten, and still I had heard nothing of the colonel's attack. At five minutes before the hour there was the same silence and uncertainty. The men were stirring a little, as anticipation began to displace the long misery of waiting, and I took out the last cigarette I should be smoking for a while. Then, while I fumbled for a match, the other side of the river burst into a sudden, solid roar of sound.

I don't remember crossing the bridge, or seeing the tanks cross it first. But I do remember that I recognized one spot we passed as the place where I had stood talking to John Goodspeed early that long day.

The impetus of our attack carried us swiftly beyond that, and far beyond the limits of our former foothold on the north bank. Try as we might to come up with it, the hard fighting seemed always to stay ahead of us.

When we passed our first concrete gun emplacement, I began to understand that our success was something more than modest and local. We were a long way from the river and Goodspeed's farmhouse. And there, somewhere behind the German second line, I came upon the colonel again.

"We're calling it a day here!" he said, still breathing hard. "We've got to expect counterattacks, got to get the guns up and get ready for them. How was your part of it? We had a tussle at first, and after that it was a walkover all the way! They acted dazed; they didn't even try to make a stand. A walkover! Where's Goodspeed?"

"I don't know, sir. They were still holding out in the farmhouse when—"

"Go and find out. I want fifty of your men, to escort prisoners back to the rear; the rest can go into the line here. Tell everybody you see to hurry up, and I want a telephone from headquarters right away. That's all, except about Goodspeed. Go and find out about him."

As I went back, the ground gained was already given over to the movement of reinforcements and supplies. I think it was the sight of a field kitchen bumping along that did most to convince me this was not all a dream. But none of the men coming up from the rear had seen Captain Goodspeed, though already, with the way word gets around among soldiers, they were all talking about him. I hurried, with anxiety growing all the more rapidly in my mind because I would not put it into words. He might be still at the farmhouse, but I didn't know whether to hope for that or not. If he was—

But he wasn't. There was no one there except two men of the Medical Corps, and they were just leaving.

"Better not go in, sir," they said. "They've all been taken out, but it's still a mess in there. One shell seems to have dropped square on the main building. It isn't pretty."

"Captain Goodspeed?" I asked.

They didn't know. "Better try the hospital first, sir. They were all wounded, more or less, though a few were walking cases. Do you want us to go look for him, sir?"

I had a jumpy feeling in my stomach, but I shook my head. The colonel had told me to go and find out.

BUT the closer I got to the hospital, the more slowly I walked. The big main tent had smaller tents grouped around it, but I didn't know where to begin my search. It was still dark, and I stumbled over ropes, looking for someone who could help me.

The smaller tents had no lights burning in them, but as I passed the door of one, I heard a man yawn. A voice said, "Hello! You awake now?"

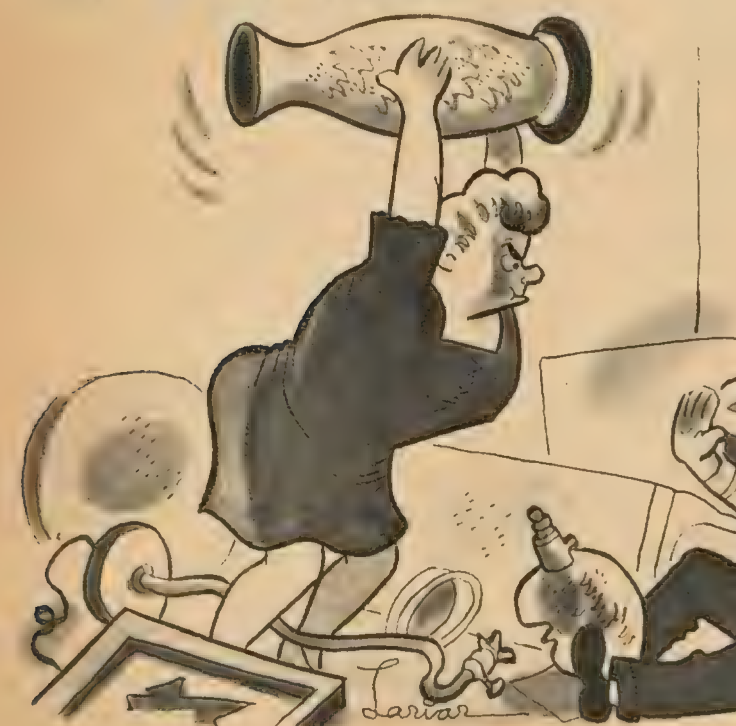
"Yes," said a second voice, and then I stopped, while the queer feeling in my stomach subsided. "What happened? How much ground did we gain?"

"Quite a parcel, from what I heard. Are you much hurt?"

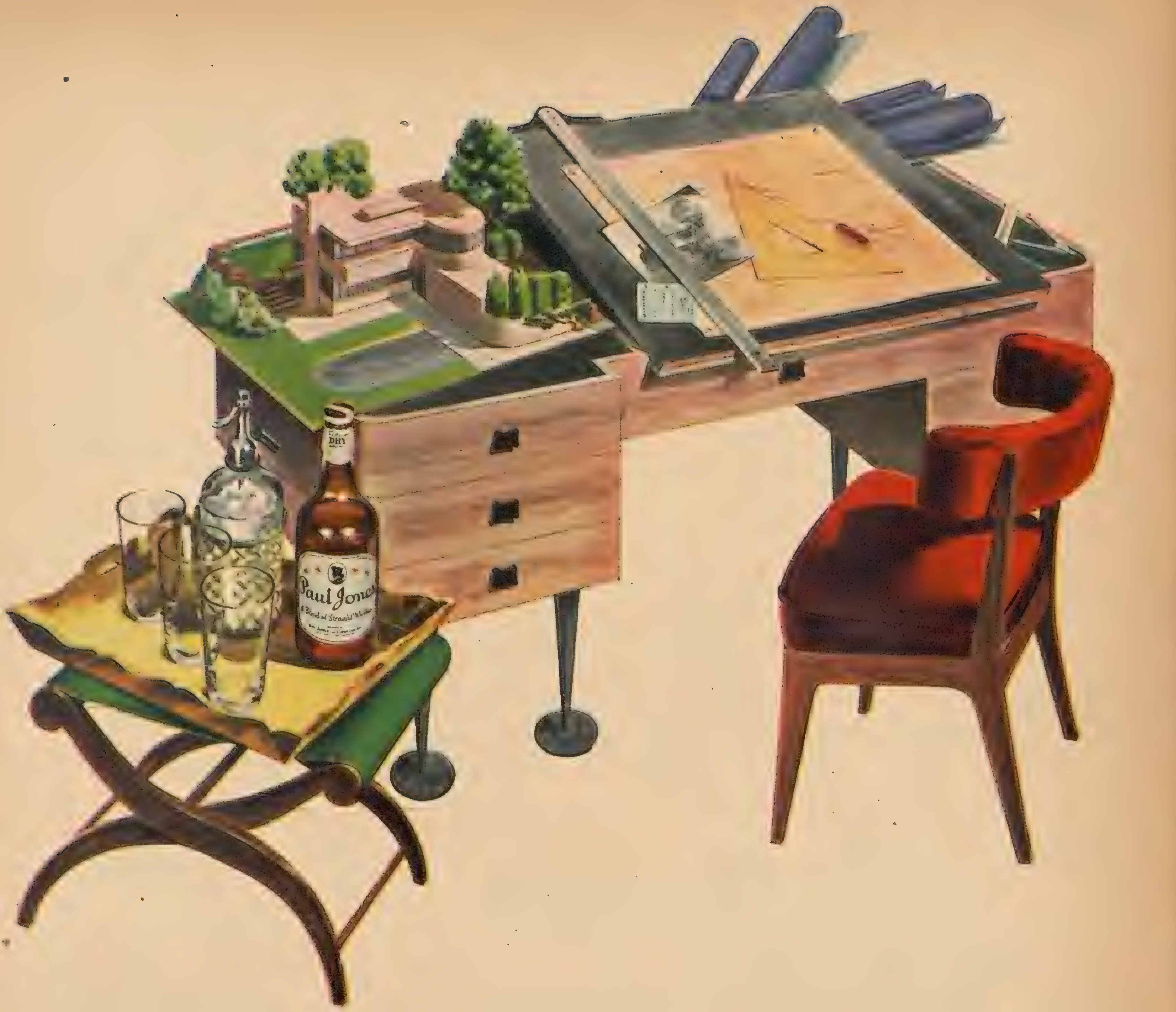
"Just a broken leg, where part of a roof fell on me. It was a good advance, eh? Well, I hope they don't give the Germans any rest; I hope they keep things moving! It's always a mistake to give up the initiative. The very fact of attacking, the element of audacity—"

THE END

THE HOME FRONT



"Well, dear, we won't quibble over it."

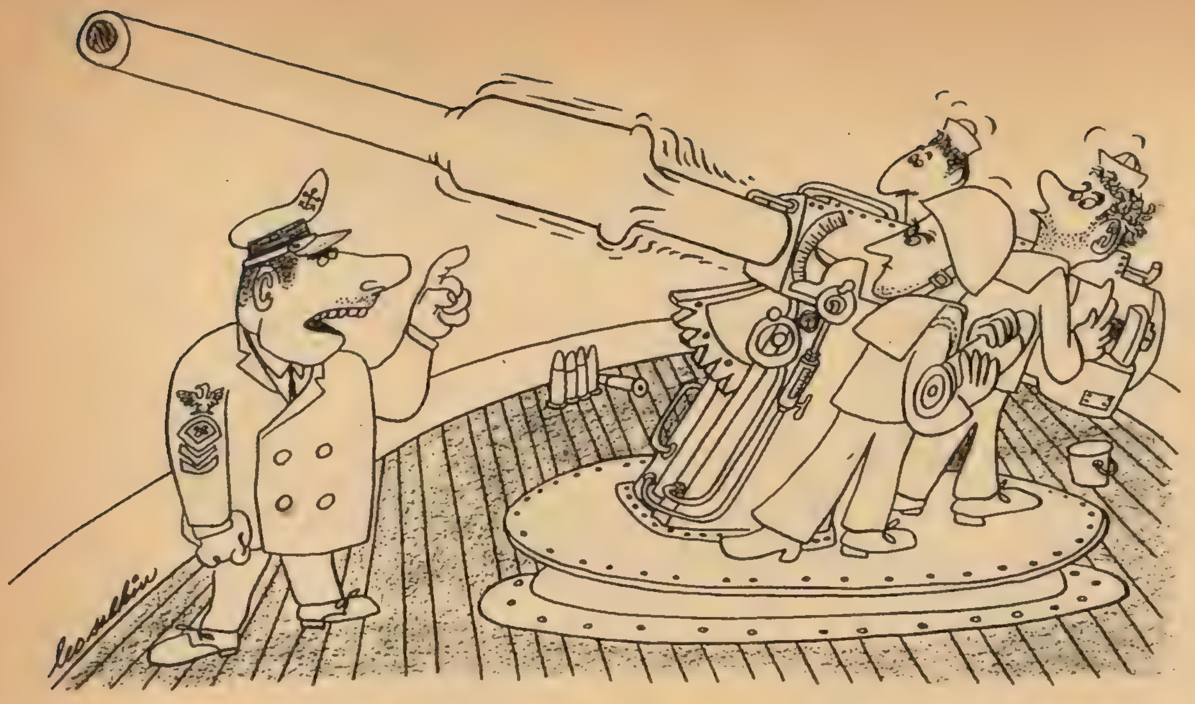

Paul Jones
A Blend of Straight Whiskies

"What about a little housewarming right now, Dick?"

Paul Jones is a whiskey worth taking your time over. You'll give yourself an opportunity to enjoy Paul Jones' superb dry flavor to the utmost, to taste the *full* measure of Paul Jones' richness and mellowness. Try lingering over your next drink of Dry Paul Jones. *A blend of straight whiskies—90 proof. Frankfort Distillers Corporation, New York City.*

DRY Paul Jones

. . . a gentleman's whiskey since 1865



"If it doesn't fit, don't force it!"

WHAT POSTWAR PROBLEM?

Continued from Page 25

would simply turn to "Coat, Ladies', Fur," and see if it was authorized under his T/E. If so, the little woman would get it. If not, she wouldn't. Simple as that. In the T/E there might be an asterisk with a footnote saying, "Underwear, wool, red, to be issued in lieu of, in rural districts." Under the Army system, everything is taken care of.

The American is an individualist. He doesn't want to wear a uniform. A Headquarters Board would decide on styles for the forthcoming year. "Hats, Ladies', Spring," for instance, would come in models M1, M2, and M3, with adaptations (M1A1, etc.) for various climates and conditions. For men, there would be "Suits, Business," "Suits, Hollywood," and "Suits, Zoot," with "Outfit, Sports" authorized for those within a certain radius of "Courses, Golf."

The thing would have to be put into Civil Service right from the beginning, lest politics and pressure groups get in their sly licks. Otherwise, Big Business might attempt to freeze, say, the style of "Shoes, Ladies', Low-Cut, w/open Toe & Heel," because of an existing surplus or to avoid obsolescence of machinery. Or a Westerner might become chairman of the Committee on Clothes, and, first thing you'd know, the country would break out in sombreros and high-heeled boots from the sunny shores of California to the rock-bound coast of Maine. But Civil Service will fix that.

There would be, admittedly, certain inconveniences and disadvantages. Even the Army probably will admit sometime that everything about its system isn't perfect. If a man wanted to drive a nail into his wall to hang a picture, he very possibly wouldn't have a hammer under his T/E, and assuredly not a nail; nor a picture to hang on the nail, unless secured from the Special Services Division, and then only such standard subjects as the Lone Wolf or the Blue Boy, with possibly the window of the Cathedral of Rheims for the higher-income T/Es. Certainly, any home run on Army lines would carry its light bulb from room to room.

TOO, if you saw a new gadget that made the beating of an egg a pleasure, you might discover that only the M1904 model was authorized, until exhausted. This, on the other hand, absolutely prevents waste. A "Knife" is a "Knife." A "Pan, Sauce" is a "Pan, Sauce." If a "Bowl, Soup" will hold soup, it is adequate. Nobody would compete in the matter of furnishings, for everybody would have the same things and the same quality. American incentive, far from being smothered, would be fostered by the lure of graduating into a better T/E.

Improvement and invention would continue. If a man invented a better "Beater,

Men who like shaves both clean and quick
Say Thin Gillette's the blade they pick
Because it saves them cash as well
And leaves their faces looking swell!

GUESS YOUR WEIGHT
WITHIN 3 POUNDS
THIN
Gillette
BLADES
Gillette
4 BLADES 10¢
4 for 10¢

Protect Your Skin From Irritation Caused By Misfit Blades

Produced by the Makers of the Famous Gillette Blue Blade

Egg" than the M1904 model, he would have an opportunity to give a demonstration before an Examining Committee to prove that his "Beater, Egg" produced a more thorough mixture more efficiently. If so, it would, with numerous changes suggested by the Testing Division, be put on the market for issue as soon as the old model was exhausted.

Wasteful packaging would disappear. Everything would be made to specification. You could buy lipstick by the yard and cold cream by the gallon; bring your own container. Canned goods would simply have a label stating the contents and specification number. Some of the joys of selective shopping might be lost, but we have to make some sacrifice for so great a cause.

Rations would, of course, be automatic issue. It would practically be impossible to eat an unbalanced diet, and we would become a race of supermen. And consider the endless worry that would be eliminated. Once a month you could figure out which days you'd have hot cakes for breakfast, and which days, eggs. That would be the end of it.

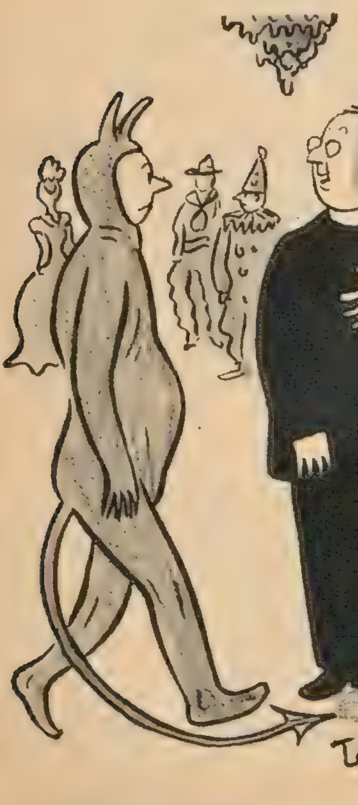
Expendables would allow for considerable American individuality. You could take expendables or you could leave them. You could hoard them and swap with the neighbor for something not authorized under your T/E. But you'd have to watch out for inspections.

Inspections? Well, yes, there would have to be inspections. How could anything resembling an Army system be run otherwise?

WE must expect some petty inconveniences under the new system. If a man's plumbing went haywire, he might find the plumber wasn't authorized to have some special gadget needed to fix it, or the plumber might be off in school learning architecture. If a doorknob fell off and he wasn't naturally a handy man, he might have to enter and exit through the window until a request for a job order went through channels.

But, after all, are we going to let petty details mar the beauty of this great plan? Let us get behind it right now, while Johnnie is still away. American ingenuity will find an answer to the minor details as they arise, and we're thinking in terms of the postwar world for many generations to come.

THE END



"Well, well! Speak of the devil—"

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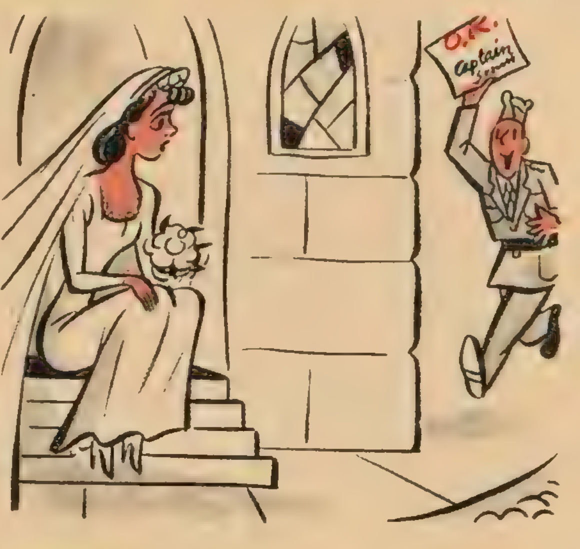
THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

Morris Markey's recent article in Liberty about the Army's navy—that redoubtable fleet of small relief and supply boats that has proved indispensable in our island-to-island war in the Pacific—has brought a flood of inquiries to this department from men who would like to sail blue water under the Army flag.

Markey reported that the G. I. salts jokingly call themselves the 4-F navy. That apparently sounded a new note of opportunity for many who have been rejected for or discharged from military service because of minor physical defects.



Permission!

Well, I've made inquiries. The Army's navy needs men. As Markey pointed out, it has more surface craft—if you count the mere number of boats, and not tonnage—than the Navy and Coast Guard put together. So I'm passing along the dope I picked up.

First off, the Water Division of the Army Transportation Corps, which operates the fleet, is less 4-F than it was at the beginning. Of course, it never was strictly that. But it desperately needed men at first and couldn't take time to be fussy about physique. Standards have been tightened since, but they're still somewhat less rigid than for the regular fighting forces.

This water-borne outfit is semimilitary; its members have the status of civilians, but are governed by Army rules and regulations. Minimum age for joining is eighteen. There is no maximum, so long as the applicant is physically fit.

Men eighteen to twenty-six, classified in 1-A, are not eligible. But those in other classifications, including 4-Fs and men who have received disability discharges from the armed forces, may apply. That's providing their disability has been corrected to the point where they can perform duties in the water transportation division. Applicants in general must be up to minimum physical requirements for Army induction. Men with special qualifications, particularly licensed masters, engine men, radio men, and so forth, are much wanted. I'd say slight defects would be waived for many of these.

The pay is attractive. For officers, it ranges from $2,200 for second officers to $2,909 for masters of C rank. For non-officers, it runs from $1,200 for able-bodied seamen to $2,070 for cooks and other ratings. And—get this—all draw a 100-percent bonus for service in a war zone.

If qualified, apply or write to Lieutenant Bernard Brown, Transportation Corps, Water Division, U. S. Army, First Avenue and 57th Street, Brooklyn, if you're in the New York area; or to Headquarters Transportation Corps, Water Division, War Department, Washington, D. C. If you make it, here's bon voyage and a promise of a special seasickness remedy later from

Old Sarge.

P. S.—I'm holding back my remedy for seasickness, to see first if any sympathetic Navy men want to suggest cures for new Army sailors. How about it, Navy?

* * *

Sarge, we've got a whale of an argument running in my barracks as to what name appears most frequently on the Army rolls. Some say Jones; others insist it's Smith.

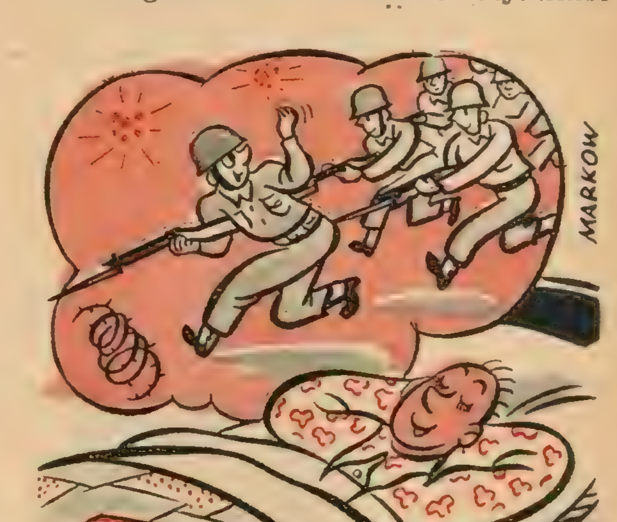
Cpl. J. D., Camp McClellan, Ala.

Keeping up with the Joneses is no problem for the G. I. Smiths. The latest War Department figures showed 72,000 Smiths in the Army and 31,320 Joneses. Matter of fact, the name of Jones ran fifth on the list. Topping it, in addition to the Smiths, were 48,500 Johnsons, 36,000 Browns, 33,600 Millers. After the Joneses came 31,000 members of the Davis family. Runners-up included: Wilson, 29,000; Anderson, 24,500; Martin, 24,300; Taylor, 22,000; Hall, 15,170; and Lewis, 15,000.

* * *

Sarge, my boy friend was a conscientious objector at the time of his induction and was assigned to noncombatant duty. Since the invasion, he writes, his views have changed and he is very sorry he is classified as a nonfighter and cannot go to the front. It would make me proud to know he was taking his share of the risks of building a new world, for I have never been able to follow his theory that everything would be all right if we refused to resist aggression. Isn't there some way he can be reclassified?

(Miss) J. R., Chicago.



Change of heart

(Continued on page 60)

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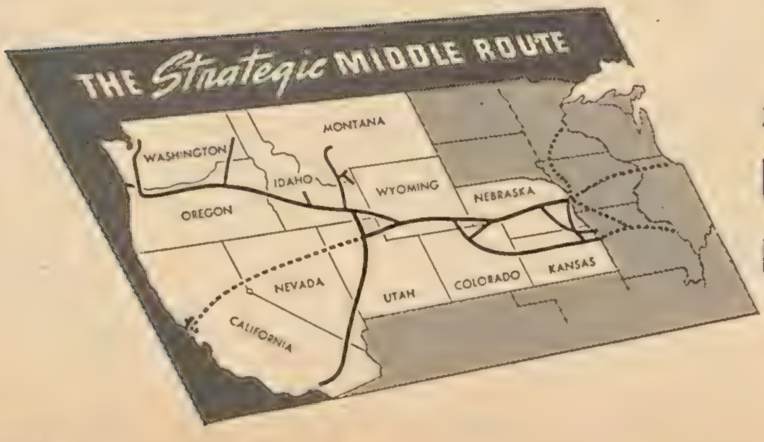
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Fit all regular razors perfectly

(Continued from page 58)

If he really has had a change of heart, the way is wide open for him to switch to a full soldiering job. All he has to do is submit a voluntary request in writing through his commanding officer for transfer to combat service. The authority is W. D. Circular 29 (1943), Sec. V, Par. 2.

* * *

My brother, serving with our Army in Italy, fell in love with an Italian girl and applied for his captain's permission to marry her. They had everything planned and were waiting out the required three months' notice when an order came through that the families must have known each other a long time. Now, her family has always lived in Italy and ours in America, so how could we have known each other? They are very much in love. Her family approves, and so do we. Isn't there some way they can be married?

(Miss) J. D., Compton, Calif.

Army regulations state permission for a soldier to wed while in a foreign country must be obtained from his C. O., who must be notified three months in advance. It is the C. O.'s duty to investigate the backgrounds of both parties and point out any factors that might tend to result in an unsuccessful marriage. I never heard of any rule that the families had to be known to each other. If that were insisted on, practically no G. I.s could marry overseas. Only thing I can suggest is that your brother re-apply for permission after his first three months' waiting period.

* * *

Sarge, in that piece about the Seabees you wrote that they go right in after the Marines. Well, how about the Army Engineers? They don't follow the infantry in; they lead 'em in. The Engineers go in first and clear out all mines and booby traps, and when the doughboys have passed, they stay behind and keep the roads and airfields in repair, so troops and supplies can keep moving up to the front. I think it's time somebody spoke up for the Engineers.

Pvt. William T. Russell,
Camp Reynolds, Pa.

You're sticking up for a good outfit, Bill. The Engineers with hairy ears have proved their worth on every front on which the Army has fought. They've done the things you mentioned, and lots more, in the ETO and in the Pacific they've done a notable job, too, paralleling that of the Seabees for the Navy and Marines.

Is it true that men discharged through a C. D. D. are subject to periodic physical examinations?

J. H. R., New Orleans, La.

Yes. Men discharged upon certificate of disability may be called by their local draft boards for new physical examinations from time to time. If medical examination shows the ailment or disability no longer exists, the discharged man may be reinducted.

* * *

If a Navy man makes out an extra allotment of $50 a month to his wife, in addition to her dependency allotment, and then changes his mind, can he stop the extra $50 after the authorization has gone past his C. O.?

Mrs. "X," Boston, Mass.

The extra allotment, being a voluntary one, can be stopped at any time the service man wishes. His wife has no say about it. The dependency allotment is mandatory and cannot be stopped.

* * *

A man who was honorably discharged from the Navy as a gunner's mate 3/C in 1929 expects to be inducted soon. Will he have a chance to get back his old rating?

R. C., Chicago, Ill.

Yes. The inductee will arrive as an apprentice seaman at the Naval Training Station, where his old records will be examined. If he is found qualified he will receive his old rating. In some cases, returning salts get an even higher rating than the one they formerly held.

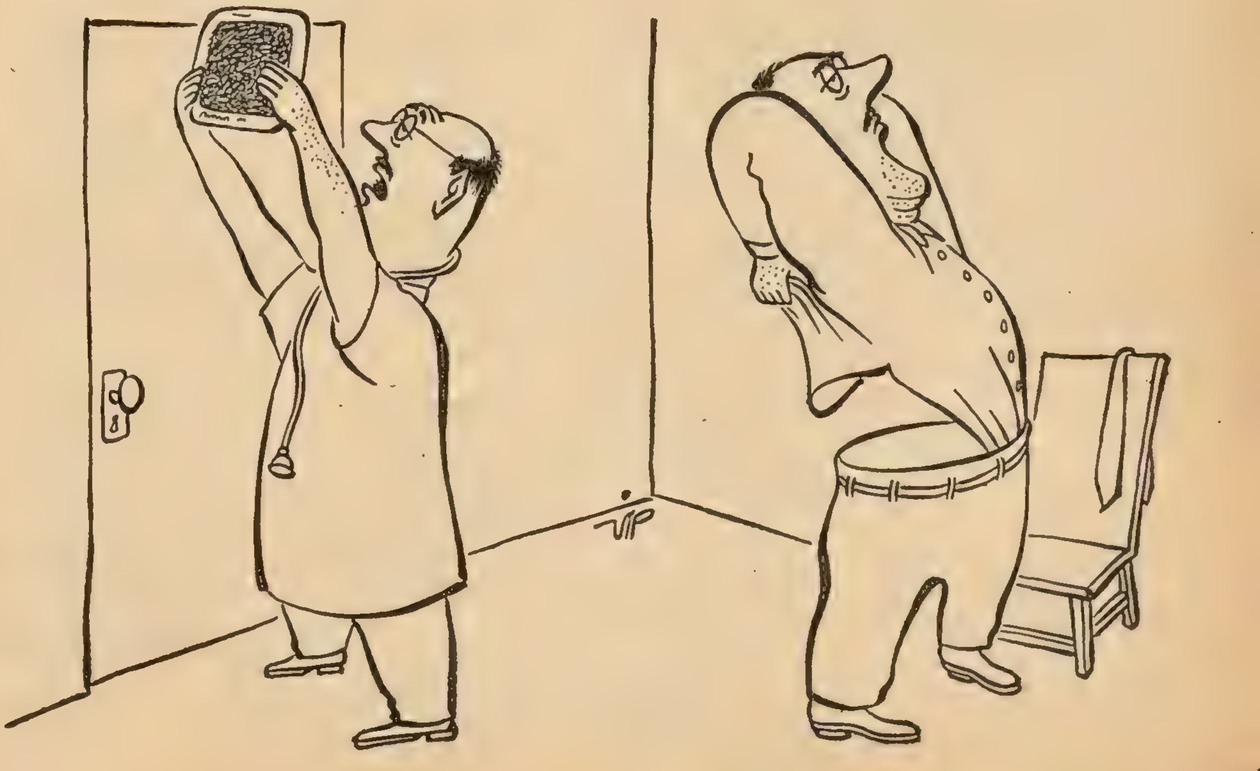
* * *

Can men in the Army Specialized Training Reserve Program send their mail free?

Pvt. B. T. R.,
Oklahoma A. & M., Stillwater, Okla.

No. Students in the A. S. T. R. P. are members of the Enlisted Reserve Corps, but are not on active military service and therefore are not entitled to the franking privilege. Wait a little longer, Bud.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.



"I can't see anything wrong with your backbone, Mr. Shaw. In fact . . ."

MISINFORMATION PLEASE

Continued from Page 13

had come to find out the enemy's plans. This tomfoolery made Howard into a top-flight comic, and after shining in Joe Cook's Rain or Shine, he hit the jack pot in Ziegfeld's Smiles at $1,100 a week. Then, after moderate movie success, came radio.

Radio at first didn't take too kindly to him. After three weeks for Chesterfield, he found himself out of work. His dead-pan timid soul didn't get over on the air; so Tom changed his voice and became a rasp-throated barker. With his old vaudeville pal and stooge George Shelton at the receiving end, he kicked around the air lanes for seven years.

Tom may have been on the way to radio oblivion when Howell's idea turned up. Oddly, on that very day he was on his way to New York's CBS to try out for another job. In the CBS lobby he ran into Shelton, also seeking work. When Tom told George about Crazy IQs, both ducked job auditions, and wound up reunited on It Pays to be Ignorant.

At fifty-nine, Tom finds the hours well suited to him. He writes at night and works the equivalent of two days a week. A confirmed New Jersey suburbanite, he likes to collect and repair old pipes and jokes, or play skeeball on his cellar alleys. He has a boat and a fifteen-year-old son, Thomas, Jr. He has yet to visit his first night club. Tom prefers to sit around telling evening-long anecdotes of show business in that dour, iron-tonsiled voice so characteristic of him.

The doggedly dumb George Shelton was born in New York City, but made his debut in Iowa in a tent show. Like Tom, he did a dialect act. He varied the accents, but German always predominated. "You should have heard my German Dixie accent," George says. "It was awful!"

Shelton left off playing comics in stock to fight in World War I. After the war, he says, he revenged himself on Germany by touring there in something called The Sporting Duchess. Back in American vaudeville again, he met and mated artistically with Tom Howard. "It's been," he says over that pipe he always sucks, "not for a year, not for life, but forever!"

Harry McNaughton, English-born, has played comedy in everything but the circus. "I would have been in that, too," says McNaughton, a ruddy-faced, peeled-looking gent given to making little jokes, "but I had trouble with my trapeze." You probably remember Harry, whose family have been thitta folk for three generations, for his Bottle on Phil Baker's program. Harry lives out Long Island way, and his ambition, besides writing a book called "The Seriousness of Being Funny," is to beat his wife at golf. Mrs. McNaughton is one of the East's top-ranking women golfers.

Harry survived three years and nine months of the last war without a scratch, except for a beating he got when he was taken prisoner by the Huns at St. Quentin. He escaped a few hours later. In 1929, he also escaped unscathed from a life-taking fire at the Pathé Studios in Hollywood. "I'm destined to be kicked by a canary and get badly bruised," he says.

The woman member of the board, Lulu McConnell, was born in Kansas City and has been yelling raucously at audiences since she was four. At sixteen—she now admits to forty—Lulu was a raving, raving musical comedy knockabout. She played with Anna Held and Lillian Russell, and is proud of having discovered Jack Oakie.

Twice married and now a widow, Lulu tried to retire a few years ago to help care

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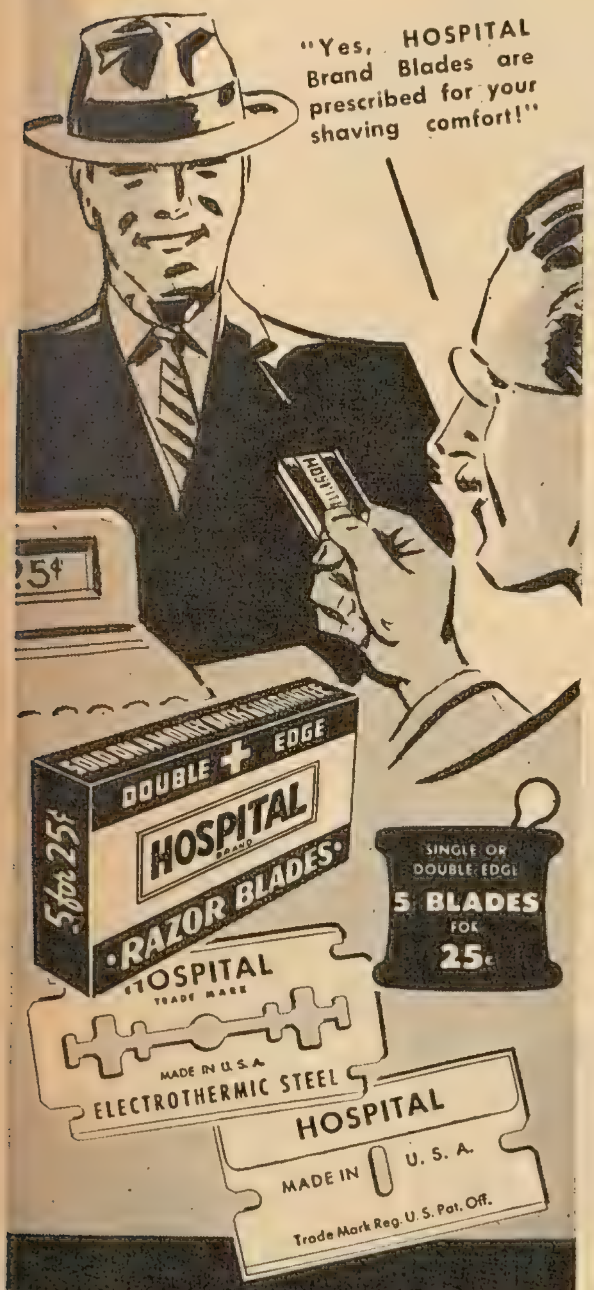

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for her two grandchildren. (She has one son.) But Lulu was restless. When the call came from Tom Howard to come balance the baritones of his two dopey experts with something more dulcet, she gave up raising petunias and grandchildren to lend her all-out parrot squawk to It Pays. She commutes from Floral Park, Long Island.

After two years, It Pays to be Ignorant has not deviated a dead brain cell from its basic design: to engender screaming hysteria by minutely plotted and timed jokes. Attired in mortarboard and gown—really a set of dirty coveralls marked on the back Arrowhead Garage—Howard opens the proceedings with some harmless stumper he always answers himself, such as "When a Chinaman goes to the dentist, what time is it?" Says Tom, "Tooth hurtie."

THEN come the introductions, as subtle as a kick in the teeth. "I give you," snarls Howard, "the quiz program that has the educators beating their heads against the walls, with a board of experts who should have the walls beaten against their heads—a board so dumb they think a person who hoards atoms is an atomizer and that a vegetarian is a man with a cauliflower ear." Then Howard may continue: "Don't suffer from ignorance. We bring you a program that will solace you—experts who know less than you do."

Next you meet the experts. The silly Mr. McNaughton is spotlighted as the true intellect of the program, a great author. Invariably Mr. M. has just dashed off some deathless work such as Kerplunk, a condensed version of The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire. Or in the John Kieran manner he is filled with some bit of undying verse, like:

Mary had a bathing suit,
  The latest style no doubt;
Because when she got in it,
  She was more than halfway out!

When Mr. McNaughton, cast as the Englishman's idea of what an American thinks an Englishman is like, subsides, Mr. Shelton, No. 2 vacuum head, establishes himself as a sort of Brooklyn Dodger, or bum, type of mentality.

"Now I give you," bawls Howard, "a rotten apple on the tree of life—a man who, when you first know him, you don't like him, then when you do, you hate him. A man who looks good from a distance but you can't get far enough away from him." Mr. Shelton generally acquaints you with a sample of the ingenuity of one of his relatives. Recently his Uncle Webfoot, the Maine farmer, completed a remarkable edifice five hundred feet long but only twelve inches wide. When asked what it was for, Mr. Shelton replied: "To store spaghetti!"

Now the dainty member of the trio takes her bow, Lulu McConnell, carefully scripted as the Tugboat Annie of the air waves. Howard turns the firehose of his invective on her. "Next I give you," he cries, "the Dorothy Thompson of Lower Canal Street—a woman whose picture doesn't appear in Who's Who but in What's This?; a woman who looks like a hangover looking for a place to hang; a woman who was born in the dark because she looks so terrible in the light."

Lulu disregards this Old-World Chesterfieldism, and goes off into some inanity about her dear friend Sadie Wright who fell down three manholes deliberately but couldn't find a man.

Thus spurred, insulted, and floor-wiped by Howard, these three fugitives from padded cells get to the main business of avoiding the obvious answers to such questions as: "Was Helen of Troy a woman?" "How often is a weekly magazine published?" "Who was President during the Hoover administration?"

When Howard asks, for example, "In which room of the house do you find the dining-room table?" one of the experts will counter with "How many rooms does the house have?" Then Mr. McNaughton will remember that he bought a piano last week and had trouble getting it home because he and a friend couldn't get it through the subway turnstile.

Shelton suggests they should have taken a bus, and this reminds Lulu of a sofa that goes back to Louis XIV. "That's nothing," Shelton sneers. "I've got a radio that goes back to Ludwig Baumann's the fifteenth!" And so on, deep into the very fringes of lunacy, till the strident Howard shouts: "Never mind, never mind! Pay Mrs. Glutsbung of South Peapack, Ohio, $13.26 for her question!"

After a couple of these screwy flights, the studio audience participates to the tune of a free carton of cigarettes, and $25 for the privilege of picking a carefully planted question from a dunce cap. The shameless and dumpy Lulu assaults all male contestants romantically. The sight of a Wave's uniform makes her yearn to enlist. "That's good, Lulu," applauds Tom; "then you can release a battleship for active service!" Uniforms, on the other hand, recall the last war to McNaughton. He remembers hearing the same bullet twice at Ypres (where he actually fought): "once when it passed me and once when I passed it."

There have been tense moments when Howard and his empty eggheads have almost had the script shot from under them. One night a girl, called up from the audience, calmly pulled a question of her own from her purse instead of picking the prepared question from the dunce cap. "Where," she asked smartly, "is the only place that the King of England cannot go?"

There followed an empty pause, known as a dead mike, and everybody had awful thoughts. McNaughton, who a few minutes before had been described as a man who had just "completed his basic training as an idiot," suddenly came through with the one and only correct answer the program will ever know. "The House of Commons," he cried.

"Correct!" shouted Howard. "Pay that woman $5.43 and get her out of here!"

Other calls for ad libbing have been less brain-taxing. Once, a studio participant, awarded the magnificent sum of sixty-three cents, started to count his prize. The experts sat stunned while the audience screamed.

"What did I do?" says Howard. "I said to Bruce Elliott, the announcer, 'What's the idea—short-changin' the customers? Ain't you ashamed?' And it got a terrific howl."

KERNELS of gold glitter amid the bantam. "Who," Howard once quizzed, "wrote Webster's Dictionary?" Replied Lulu indignantly, "How should I know? I didn't. I've been sitting here all evening minding my own business!"

Another night Miss McConnell rattled: "You know, Mr. Howard, I'm getting to be quite a prophet. When I went to bed last night I said, 'Well, tomorrow's another day.' And do you know what? When I woke up this morning, it was!" To the nutcracker: "Who is buried in Grant's Tomb?" Shelton retorted, "I don't know—I never go to funerals."

Offmike, Howard remarks cryptically, "Radio has made a bum out of me." I believe he refers to the lazy hours.

Some may want to argue the point. Maybe it's Howard who has made a bum out of dull quiz shows.

THE END

U. S. DIPLOMACY AND THE VATICAN

Continued from Page 17

cedure may stir up some old controversies about diplomatic relations between the United States and the Head of the Roman Catholic Church. It promises to provoke many new arguments both for and against establishment of a permanent American Embassy at the Papal Court. Americans, with characteristic inquisitiveness, already have started asking questions. When did the United States establish diplomatic relationships with the Holy See? Is Myron Taylor a representative of the government or the State Department—or is he a private citizen? What is the Pope's delegate doing in Washington? Why maintain relations with the head of a church?

On a common-sense basis there would seem to be every reason for an exchange of envoys between the government of the United States and the Sovereign Pontiff. Aside from the fact that there are twenty million Catholics in the United States, an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Spanish and Portuguese America are Catholics. In spite of many revolutionary attacks on clericalism in Mexico, Cuba, Central and South America, the influence of the Catholic Church remains very strong among the ruling classes and the agricultural workers. American failure to recognize the Holy See as a sovereign power gives one more excuse for agitation against what some call "the imperialistic materialism of the godless Yanqui."

SOME of these considerations inspired Mr. Taylor's original appointment three years ago. However, President Roosevelt has carefully refrained from breaking with United States diplomatic tradition, and Mr. Taylor is commissioned as a personal representative only, although with the honorary rank of ambassador. It has often been carefully pointed out by our State Department that Mr. Taylor does not represent the United States at the Vatican. His position does not include any power to speak for our government. In essence, he is an intermediary between the President and the Vatican authorities for the exchange, discussion, and consideration of information and other communications of mutual concern.

Yet even this has aroused considerable hostility on the part of the Protestant political majority of the United States. Traditionally, this nation has and desires to have no official relations whatsoever with any religious body as a hierarchy or established organization. One of the most important tenets of our political faith is complete impartiality on the part of our government toward religion. It is not only a profound conviction of a very large section of United States citizens, but is firmly rooted in the Constitution.

Historically, the United States has never sent an envoy to the head of a church, as such. While the Pope was actually sovereign of the States of the Church—nearly all of what is now Central Italy, including Rome itself—American ministers were accredited to the Court of the Lateran. But this representation ended abruptly in 1867, when Garibaldi's red shirts had united most of Italy and only the power of Napoleon III's French troops held Rome itself for the Pope. Since then, and particularly from 1870 to 1929, when the Pope had no territory beyond his actual residence and the two churches of St. Peter's and St. John Lateran in Rome, our State Department has been "officially unaware" of the Pope's existence as a governmental equal.

* * *

A Topeka, Kansas, tax assessor recently ran across the newest and best answer yet to the question on the assessment blank: "Nature of taxpayer." The answer: "Very mean."

* * *

Whether we will be able to maintain this detached attitude in the face of future events is a debatable point. Some profess to see in the resumption of the Taylor mission an opening wedge toward full recognition of the Pope as a temporal sovereign, and it has aroused strong protest in some quarters.

To understand exactly why the question of diplomatic relations between Washington and Vatican City may be a stormy item in the coming Presidential campaign as well as a continuing cause of argument during the years of construction after the war, one must turn back the pages of history. Few Americans are aware that when George Washington took command of the Continental Army in 1775, public celebration of the mass in Catholic churches was generally forbidden in all the colonies except Maryland. In Philadelphia, one church, St. Joseph's, did hold public devotions, but this was a privilege grudgingly granted and not in any sense a right. Nearly everywhere throughout the colonies—except in Catholic Maryland and French Canada—"Pope's Day," November 5, was a kind of Fourth of July; effigies of the Pope were burned in village greens and city squares to the accompaniment of insults to the distant Pontiff.

This practice was so widespread as to induce General Washington to issue an order decrying the "observance of that ridiculous and childish custom . . . devoid of common sense . . . so monstrous as not to be suffered or excused. Indeed," declared the general, "instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to express public thanks to our Catholic brethren, as to them we are indebted for every late success over the common enemy in Canada."

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S order was the first act on a country-wide scale to break through the religious isolationism of the American colonials. It appears to have been effective in curbing anti-Catholic demonstrations, at least within the shifting areas where the Continental Armies held control.

The opposition of the great majority of Americans to direct communication with any official representative of the Pope has been a source of great embarrassment to incumbents of the White House and the State Department in many crucial periods of our history. As evidenced by the above, the problem has existed since before the

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formation of the American Republic, and for 161 years has been treated according to a precedent laid down by the Continental Congress in 1783. The newly won independence of the United States made necessary the reorganization of various religious denominations in America, particularly those which depended upon European control. Since there was no American representative in Rome, the Papal Nuncio in Paris was directed to ask Benjamin Franklin to forward a note to Philadelphia explaining that a change was contemplated in the Vicar Apostolic for the United States, and requesting that the Congress give its assent to the new appointment.

After due deliberation, the Continental Congress replied, through Dr. Franklin: "The subject of this application being purely spiritual, it is without the jurisdiction and power of Congress, who have no authority to permit or refuse it." That formula has governed American-Vatican relations from that day to this.

Today, more than forty nations, including Great Britain and most of South America among our Allies, and Japan and Germany among our enemies, maintain regular embassies at the Vatican and give full diplomatic recognition to the Pope as an independent sovereign. Many of these countries do not have Catholic majorities. Some, such as Great Britain and France, have definite legal barriers against certain Catholic activities within their own boundaries. Yet the international position and diplomatic influence of the Pope is admitted by their Foreign Offices.

DURING the Civil War, when wide recognition of the Confederate States as an independent belligerent might have meant defeat for the Federal Government, Lincoln's Secretary of State, William H. Seward, realized the necessity of putting the Northern cause favorably before various European groups. In order to reach the Catholic groups, Secretary Seward, with the secret permission of President Lincoln and the other members of the Cabinet, dispatched The Most Reverend John Hughes, Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, as a personal representative. To avoid an outburst of public indignation, Archbishop Hughes was accompanied by Bishop McIlvaine of the Episcopal Church and Thurlow Weed, a New York newspaperman turned politician.

At a private meeting with President Lincoln and Secretary Seward at Washington in October, 1861, Archbishop Hughes plainly stated that he could not accept any official appointment to represent the President of the United States. However, at the urgent request of Seward, he agreed to become a personal emissary of Lincoln, with full powers to set forth the Union cause in Europe. Just what he did and said for the cause will probably never be known. No record exists in the State Department of the appointments of the archbishop, Bishop McIlvaine, and Weed, nor are any reports from them to be found in the archives at Washington.

But it is known that the archbishop interviewed Napoleon III, who was then toying with the idea of sending a French military expedition through Mexico to help the Confederacy. Whether the archbishop dissuaded him from this idea, or whether some other factor prevented the expedition, it is now impossible to tell. Likewise today no one can guess what effect the archbishop's audiences with Pope Pius IX had upon the Head of the church.

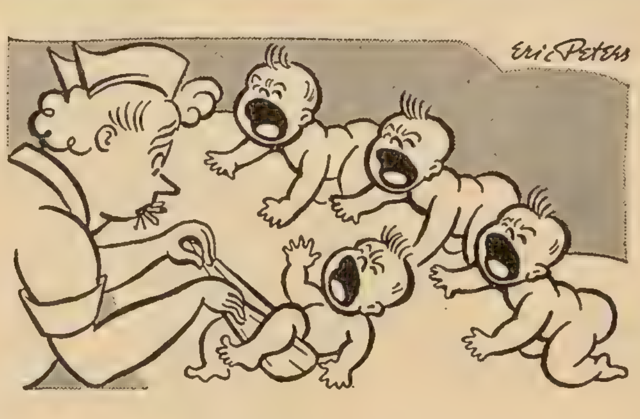
IT is barely possible that in the Lincoln Papers, held by the Library of Congress, and not to be released before 1947, some report from at least one of these three envoys may be disclosed. Archbishop Hughes did write an "open letter" on his return from the mission, addressing his colleague, the Archbishop of New Orleans, and setting forth the arguments he had used throughout Europe in favor of the Union. This publication was equally resented by Southern Catholics and by Northern anti-Catholics as a dangerous mingling of church and state.

No such outcry has followed the mission which Archbishop Spellman of New York performed for President Roosevelt in 1943. Archbishop Spellman, like Archbishop Hughes, disclaimed all diplomatic authority and, like him, issued public statements of his journey in magazine articles and a book. But these concerned chiefly his visits to American troops on various fronts, where he was officially welcomed as Catholic Military Vicar-General, a purely ecclesiastic position.

Attempts have been made to lure the question of direct U. S.-Vatican diplomatic relations out into the open, but officialdom has always politely skirted it. No politician has cared to be caught in a cross-fire discussion of this combustible subject. And no man who ever ran for office has forgotten the Presidential campaign of 1884, when a zealous Republican introduced his party's

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

(Unabashed)



PANTYMONIUM: Tumult while changing the quadruplets.

NINCOMPOP: A stupid old man.

BLOODGEON: A crimson shillalah.

DECKTATION: Yeoman taking a letter aboard ship.

BANQUIT: All over but the spouting.

T.P.: An abbreviated Indian tent.

STATTIC: Radio disturbance in the garret.

NAPTUNE: A sleep in the deep.

LEDGESLATOR: A lawmaker from the rock-ribbed shores of Maine who is shelf-made.

EWE-KON: An Alaskan mamma sheep.

candidate, James G. Blaine, as the opponent of the party of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion." The remark was one reason for Blaine's defeat by Grover Cleveland. There was a more recent echo of these fireworks in 1928 when Al Smith ran for President. So American politicians generally avoid such religious T. N. T.

The frankest opinion on the subject has come from a religious leader, Bishop Ryan of Omaha, who recently advocated full American recognition of the Vatican's political status by this country.

"It is patently absurd," says Bishop Ryan, "to assume that Germany, France, and England now recognize the Vatican State for any high motives of Christian charity. If they give something, they expect something in return. It is not difficult to imagine what the hard-headed diplomatists of the major European powers expect from presence at the Court of St. Peter. They see clearly that the Vatican, as a worldwide moral power, must be reckoned with, and they proceed so to act on an assumption whose practical truth has been proved times without number.

"It seems difficult for many American Protestants to appreciate the distinction between political and religious recognition. That this distinction exists and possesses validity is apparent from the acts of the great European Protestant powers who recognize the Vatican but do not accept the Catholic Church. It may be difficult to get all the American people to reach this same soundly logical and practical conclusion."

Bishop Ryan believes that if the government of the United States should accord recognition to the Pope as a temporal ruler, "the substantial benefits of this act would flow in the direction of the Washington government, not in that of the Holy See. The Pope and the Church over which he rules would gain prestige, but little else."

THE Vatican rightly has been called the "listening post of Europe." Its intelligence service is the best in the world. Its "intelligence officers" are members of the Catholic clergy who are in touch in every country of the world with people of all social strata. But the only sure way for any power to tap the Vatican's rich store of information is to have daily contact with the Papal Secretariat of State. And its representative must have the confidence of the spokesmen of the Holy See.

The President's selection of Myron Taylor for the delicate post at Vatican City was well considered. Everyone knows that Taylor has had a most successful career as an industrialist. Fewer people are aware that, in addition, his knowledge of Italy is extensive. Before the war, for a number of years Taylor spent his vacation months at his villa in Florence, where he gained first-hand knowledge of the problems of industrial Northern Italy.

In his visits to Rome in behalf of the American Academy, he came into contact with Vatican scholars, including the late Pope Pius XI, who was curator of the Vatican Library. Taylor's interest in the irreplaceable historical and literary collections of the Vatican was a very practical one. As trustee of the New York Public Library, he was concerned with obtaining photostats and microfilms of the unique manuscripts guarded by the Roman Church.

Naturally, these contacts over many years have won him many warm and respectful acquaintances, not only within the Roman hierarchy, but throughout the Italian peninsula and elsewhere in Europe. They are essential for his present mission, and probably could not be paralleled by any other American citizen today. Only a high sense of patriotism could have induced Taylor, at the age of seventy, to undertake one of the most important commissions ever delegated to a private citizen by an American President.

What about the Vatican's relations with us? Who is the Pope's representative in Washington? Why do we know so little about him, and what is the nature of his mission?

The Papal Delegate to Washington is Archbishop Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, one of the great diplomats of the present era. The fact that he has remained largely unknown to the American public is a measure of his diplomatic ability. His ecclesiastic power, transcending that of any of the local archbishops, extends over some twenty million Catholic American citizens. Under canon law, the rule of Catholicism, his decisions regarding both clergy and laymen in the United States can be countermanded only by the Pope himself.

Archbishop Amleto Giovanni Cicognani is officially termed "Delegatus" from the Holy See to the United States of America. This distinguished churchman maintains a modest legation in our capital, since he has no official diplomatic standing in the eyes of our State Department. No treaty exists between the Catholic Church and the United States. There is little doubt that the Vatican would welcome such a treaty, or concordat, as it would be called in clerical language. However, a concordat would have to contain a number of diplomatic details which the Vatican considers essential and which the United States Senate might find impossible to ratify for plain political reasons.

One of these is the seemingly unimportant matter of precedence. Since the Congress of Vienna, which ended the Napoleonic Era in Europe, papal Nuncios—as the Popes' ambassadors are called—always take precedence over all other ambassadors in any capital to which they are accredited. This is in direct conflict with our system of seniority, by which the dean of the diplomatic corps in Washington is the envoy with the longest residence in our capital. This is not merely an honorary position, but one with real responsibilities and powers. The dean of the corps in any capital is expected to advise a newly accredited envoy of the particular customs of the Foreign Office to which he is newly introduced, and, even more important, very often to suggest ways of overcoming the personal peculiarities of the Foreign Minister and of the other members of the corps. It is obvious that no American politician who kept in touch with his constituents could agree to place a representative of the Roman Pontiff in such a permanent position of authority in Washington.

EVEN if the Vatican should waive this time-honored pre-eminence, there is another privilege even more controversial. Under international law, ambassadors are not permitted to enter into relations with citizens or the rulers of countries except through diplomatic channels of the Foreign Office to which they are accredited. This rule does not hold in the case of Papal Nuncios, who are allowed and even expected to have free intercourse with laymen, bishops, or any communicant of the Roman faith. Although it is almost inconceivable that this should even be interpreted as giving Catholic Americans a kind of dual citizenship, it still is a powerful political argument against diplomatic recognition of the Church Temporal.

But it is the duality of the apostolic and diplomatic roles of the Papal Nuncios which presents the most difficult hurdle

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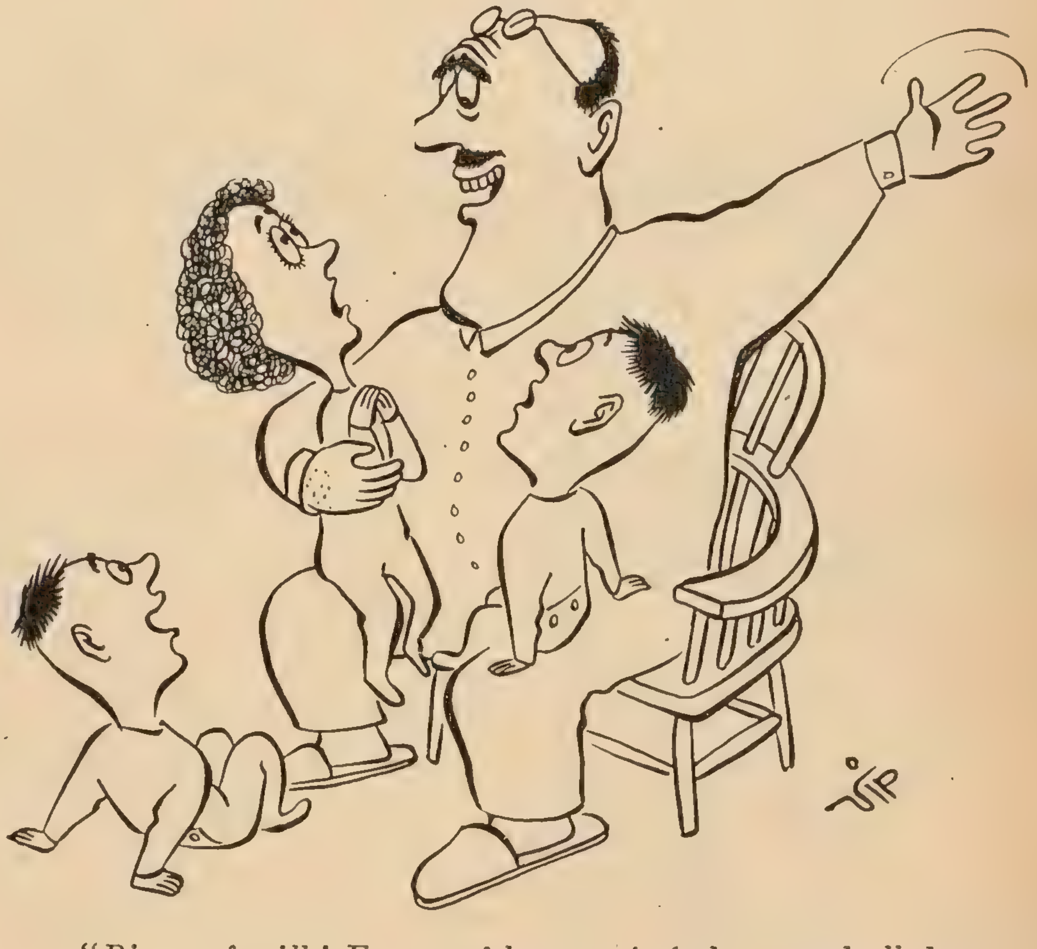

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to those desiring an official exchange of ambassadors between Washington and Vatican City. This duality has even given rise to difficulties within the Church organization itself. The curialistic hierarchy—that is, the political machinery of the Church—comes into sharp and sometimes painful conflict with the Apostolic—the purely spiritual—mission. On occasions this has required stern action by the Pope himself: removal of a nuncio, or a considerable shake-up in the local hierarchy. So far, no such incident has happened in the United States. Opponents of relations with the Vatican say this is only because we have had no nuncios in Washington.

Whether that is true or merely prejudiced opinion, there is little doubt that a nunciature in Washington would be regarded as an excellent opportunity by any ambitious churchman. The great nunciatures have always been looked upon as positions to be occupied by men who probably will be made cardinals eventually. Under canon law a cardinal cannot be appointed nuncio, and if a Papal diplomat should be raised to the princely rank while still in office as envoy, he would retain his post only temporarily.

The two most recent Popes served as nuncios before ascending the throne of St. Peter.

Normally, Archbishop Giovanni Cicognani undoubtedly would have been given a cardinal's hat, and transferred to Rome, long ago. There are few in the Vatican today who possess his talents and experience. But skillful maintenance of relations with the hierarchy in America is regarded by Rome as so important that he has remained in Washington throughout the three Roosevelt administrations.

Personally, the Apostolic Delegate is impressive. Although he is only slightly above medium height and slender, his violet robes and immense dignity make him appear taller. His face is thin and ascetic, but his very dark Italian eyes radiate intelligence and give the impression of missing nothing. In conversation Archbishop Cicognani reveals a shrewd sense of humor and much social charm.

No layman knows just how the Delegatus feels about the question of full diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the State Department. No doubt he hopes that they will be established, but no doubt, too, he is realistic enough to recognize that 161 years of American tradition are aligned against that hope.

THE END

AIR BATTLE FOR SAIPAN

Continued from Page 27

very close to safety. As they went down, splashing into the water, the fleet lost way and turned to the job of rescue. Pilots and crewmen, in their yellow rafts and life jackets, dotted the sea. It was urgent work, trying to gather them up, but slow. And with each passing moment the Japanese were steaming on into the west.

Our total losses for the day were astoundingly low: twenty-two pilots, twenty-seven crewmen—and the ninety-five planes.

And what had our attack accomplished? The final reckoning showed that we had sunk one carrier and damaged four others. We had sunk one destroyer and damaged six other warships. We had sunk two tankers and damaged three more.

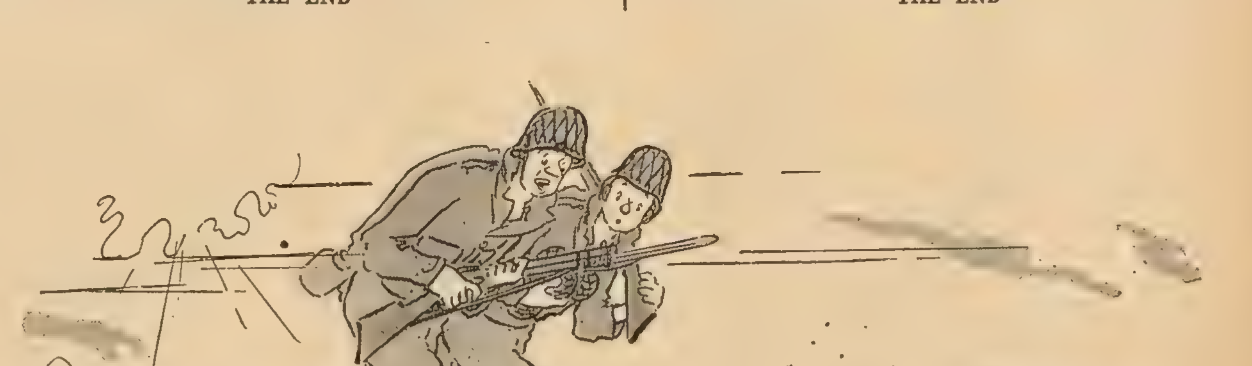
WHEN it seemed fruitless to continue the work of rescue longer, our fleet once more turned into the west and resumed the chase.

During the night the enemy did not make great speed toward land, toward the protection of land-based aircraft on Formosa (for which he was heading). His speed was reduced by the damaged ships in his column, and further reduced by the evasive course he felt impelled to pursue. At seven o'clock the next morning, our search planes found him again. Now he was at longitude 132 degrees east, latitude 17 degrees 30 minutes north. He had actually made good only 156 sea miles in a straight line from the original position in which we first sighted him. But, due to the delays of rescue and of pursuit, we had made less mileage along that same line. Instead of being able to close the range, we had actually opened it, and now we were about 400 miles behind him.

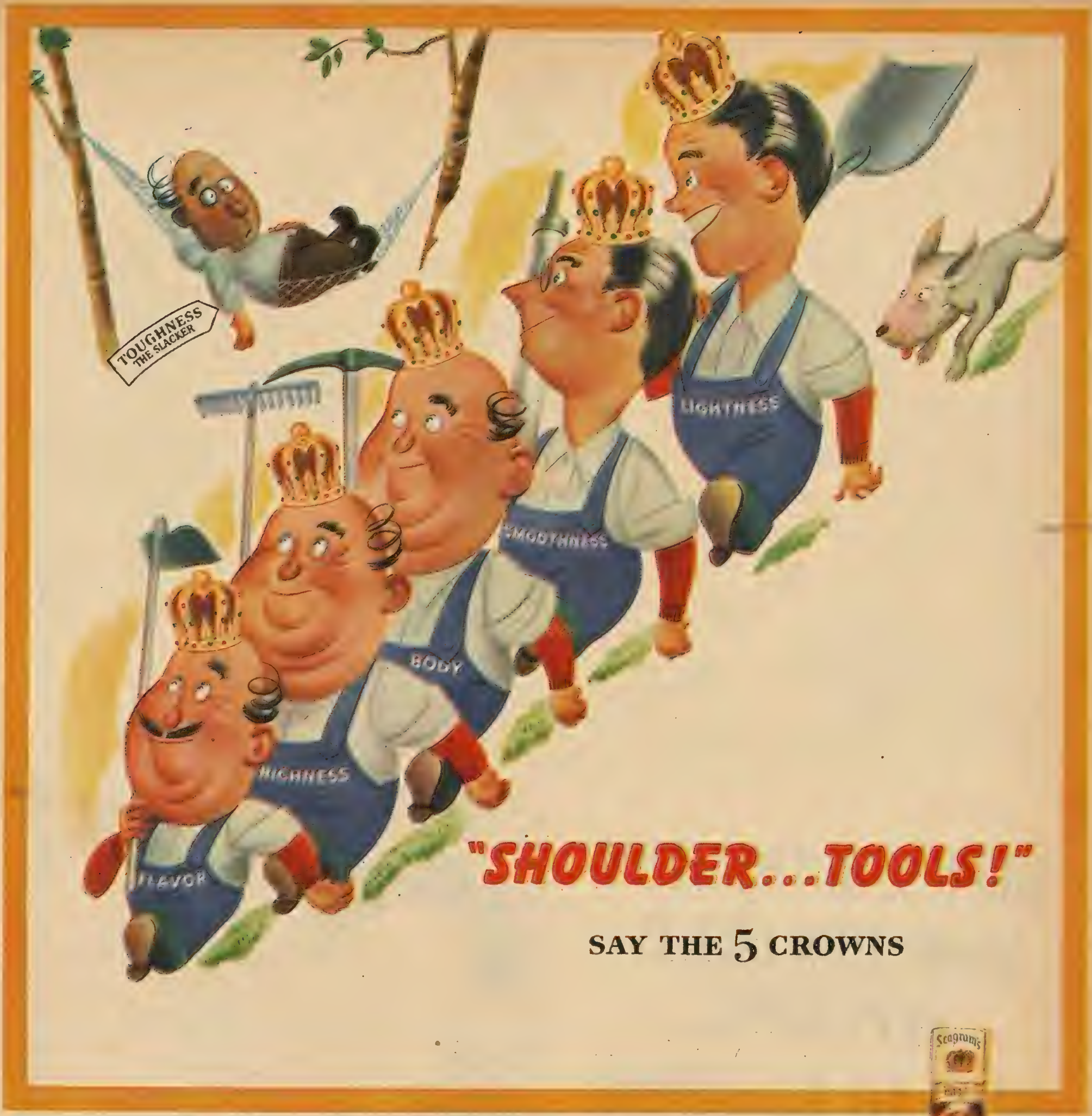
During the day, the 21st, two sweeps of planes were sent out in the hope of reaching the enemy again. But both were forced by the falling needles of their fuel gauges to turn back before they could catch sight of a single ship. The action therefore was broken off.

So it happened. This is hardly the time for speculation upon our own actions. That must wait until the day when the reports of the admirals are proper subjects for public inspection. Until that day comes, we may look at the balance of the injuries we inflicted against the losses we sustained, and take comfort.

THE END



"O'Connor has certainly learned to keep his head down."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THE BETTER THINGS

Continued from Page 19

the floor, and sheets on the bed as clean as snow. And his old lady was a knockout." He looked at Rose. "You won't laugh if I tell you something?"

Rose was so startled she stopped chewing her gum. "Why should I laugh?"

"Well, when I left Hal and his ma I'm damned if I didn't have tears in my eyes."

"Whaddya know?"

The two sat there in silence for half an hour. Finally Howie yawned and said he had to get home. They walked down the winding road toward the bottom of the hill. Rose was thoughtfully turning something over in her mind.

Howie interrupted her trend of thought. "What've you been doing with yourself?"

Rose shrugged. "Same old thing. I'm a good waitress, so I don't worry none about work. Plenty dates every night. Them sailors chase me till I'm ragged. We mostly go to movies and dances. I never did go in much for hangin' out in bars. Too many gals go rummy that way."

Howie grinned and nodded at her chest prominently outlined by the tight sweater. "I don't guess you have much trouble getting dates."

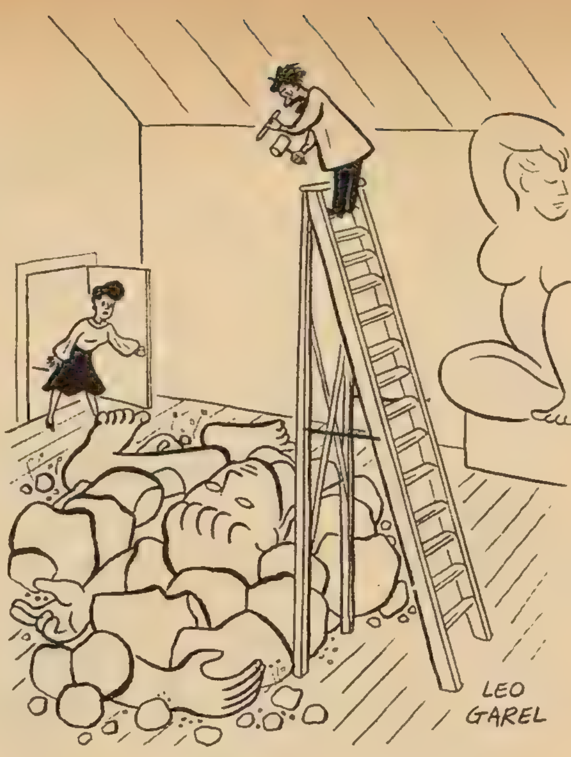
Rose snapped at him, "Don't go getting any ideas. I just don't like to sit at home. See?"

"O. K., O. K. Means nothing to me."

Rose smoothed her skirt with her hands and her hips swayed against Howie as she walked. She remarked casually, "You used to take me out a lot years ago."

Howie nodded. "You were a nice kid."

Rose sighed. "I could never forget you. When you went to work on the docks, though, I didn't see you so much."



"That last little tap did it!"

"Well, I worked pretty hard, Rose. Ma was sick all the time then and had to have an operation. Jake and me were the only single ones and Jake was chasing around with the Lonnergan girl, so I kept the house going and took care of Ma."

"But you were a good worker, anyway."

"I guess so. I don't mind hard work."

They reached the Embarcadero and walked along by the train tracks. Rose lived in the second house from the Pattersons'. They stopped in front of her house and lit cigarettes and talked in the dark.

When Howie said he had to be going, Rose put a hand on his arm and said laughingly, "What're your plans for the future, Howie? I mean, are you engaged, or anything—"

Howie snorted, "Hell, I've been away two years. I'd almost forgotten the last year what a white woman looked like."

Rose laughed nervously. "You sure have to make up for lost time. Well, good night, Howie." She put her arms about him and pressed her body against his and kissed his mouth. Then she turned and ran into the house.

Howie walked to his own home and up the dark stairway to the second floor. His old room was in the front of the house. He undressed and got between the blankets. There were no sheets on the bed. He lit a cigarette, puffed it a moment, then stamped it out in a cracked saucer.

He stared up at the ceiling and thought about Rose. Then he shook his head. She represented the trap he wanted to escape. Marriage to her would be the same as Ma and Pa. There would be a dozen kids and bills and the everlasting insurance to pay and not an extra dollar to live decently on, and, in the end, fighting and nagging and the evening bottle of cheap sherry.

Howie closed his eyes and mumbled, "I've seen better things. I know where they are. But it isn't all money. It's something else. I gotta find it. I just got to."

Rose was in the Patterson home first thing in the morning, helping Ma with the breakfast. Jake, burly and broad-shouldered, with a prodigious capacity for alcohol and killing work, watched Rose's swaying hips and winked at Howie. "Not bad," he commented.

After breakfast, Howie wanted to take a long walk by himself, but Rose went along with him. They went down to Fishermen's Wharf and watched the tiny boats coming in with fresh crabs.

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A fresh wind was blowing and Rose took off her hat and shook her thick hair free. She looked at Howie and laughed and said, "I like the wind." Howie was startled. For a moment she had seemed like a child. He tried to visualize her in better clothes and without the heavy make-up. He realized with a shock that she would be unusually attractive.

They stood on the edge of the wharf and looked out over the bay. Rose stretched her arms and said wistfully, "Sometimes I stand here and look at the clean water and wish I could take off all my clothes and swim across to the other side and just keep on going until—well"—she ended raggedly —"until I became somebody else."

Howie chuckled. "That's a crazy idea."

Rose turned on him. "You're not the only one with ideas!" she cried. "Do you think I enjoy waiting on tables and getting my legs pinched and living in a shack? I like good things too, like those people you were talking about."

"I guess everybody does."

She quieted down, then whispered, "But people just don't know where to look."

HOWIE blinked with surprise. "I was thinking the same thing last night. Y'know, all the time I was fighting out there in the war zone I kept thinking about that one thing. You gotta go home. It makes no difference where your home is, or what it's like, when you're through fighting you gotta go home. But when you get home, then what? You just can't sit and coast along, because if you do you're trapped. I'd wind up like the old man."

He pounded his right fist into the palm of his left hand. "But what's a guy to do? I got nothing to offer. I only got one year of high school. I don't even talk right. I know, because I've been around guys who do talk right. So where am I supposed to start looking?"

Rose turned her head and looked into his eyes. She said softly, "Howie, you're starting right just by saying that. I'm gonna tell you something. I've been nuts about you ever since we was kids."

"Aw—"

"It's the truth. But there's something else, too. You're reliable. You always were. You'd make—well—you'd make a good husband. That's why I came over to help your ma with the breakfast. I was gonna give you the rush." She looked away from him and mumbled, "Not now."

Howie grinned. "Why not?"

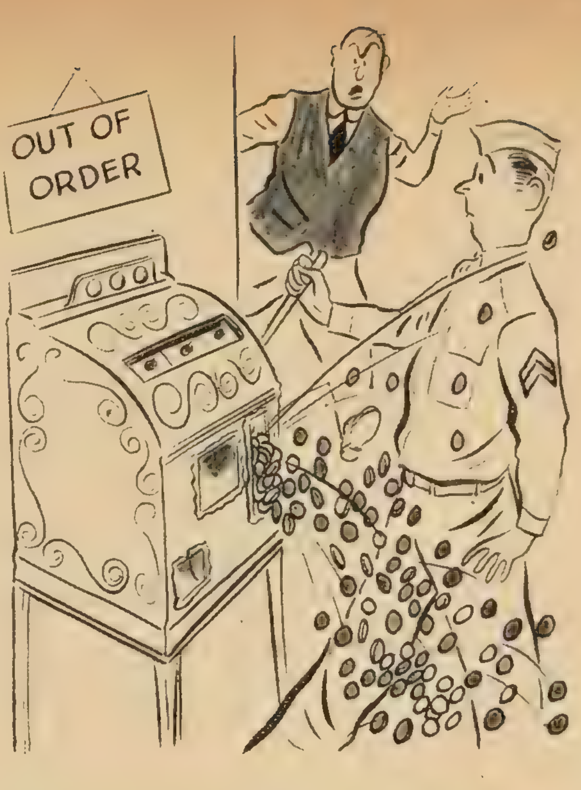
"It just ain't right. You and me, if we got married, you'd work on the docks and I'd wait on tables until the first kid come along, and after that we'd be sunk." She looked up at him again. "That's not for you. The thing for you is to start fighting for what you want."

"How do you mean?"

"Just what I said, that's all. You don't coast along. You pick out a decent place to live and you live there. Then you get a job with a future to it. What if it does pay less than workin' on the docks? There ain't many places you can go as a stevedore. So you get a job where you can go places, no matter how long it takes, or even if you don't ever get there. At least you're trying and you're not coasting and you don't wind up a stumble-bum with big shoulders and a quart of sherry for a brain."

She blinked back sudden tears and turned away from him. Her high heels clicked down the wharf. Howie watched her go and saw her wave to a group of soldiers. Then she was out of sight, almost running. Howie looked down at the wharf and started to smile. He felt good.

Howie wandered about town for a week. He talked with anyone he met and he asked questions. His questions concerned two matters only—a good job and a decent place to live. Jobs were plentiful at high wages, but living quarters were almost impossible to find. A woman in a realty office finally asked him, "Can you afford to buy a place?"



"What's the matter? Can't you read the sign?"

Howie frowned. "I don't know," he replied. "I got twelve hundred bucks."

The woman smiled. "You don't need half that much. Come along with me."

She drove him to the Mission District, then to a section on a hill opposite Dolores Park. She nosed the car into the curb in front of a small house set back from the sidewalk. There was a patch of grass in front and a little gate. The woman unlocked the front door with a key from a big ring and stepped inside.

Howie looked about him and chuckled. It was a little house of five rooms, with a screened porch looking out over flowers planted in the back yard. The place was spick and span and airy and the sun slanted in through the front windows.

The woman explained, "It's for sale complete. We just got the listing yesterday. If you would care to have your wife look at it . . ."

Howie evaded that by asking, "How much?"

"Well, you'd have to make an offer. But I think it could be handled for six hundred down. With insurance, deeds, and a few other items, it would come to about seven hundred cash."

Howie made another inspection of the house, then walked outside and looked across the street at the wide lawns of the park. He inhaled a deep breath of air and nodded at the realty woman. He whispered, "I never knew it would be so easy."

The woman stared at him. "I don't understand. If you care to make an offer—"

"Sure I'll make an offer." He counted out seven hundred dollars and handed it to her. "Here. You fix it up for me."

"Well, really," she smiled, "I don't need this much. A hundred dollars to start the proceedings—"

"No. You keep it. You just get me this house."

The woman touched his shoulder and promised, "I'll get it for you."

Howie telephoned her every day after that. He was afraid the house would disappear, or someone else would offer more for it. But in four days the deed was safely tucked away in his money belt. Jake was the only one he told about it.

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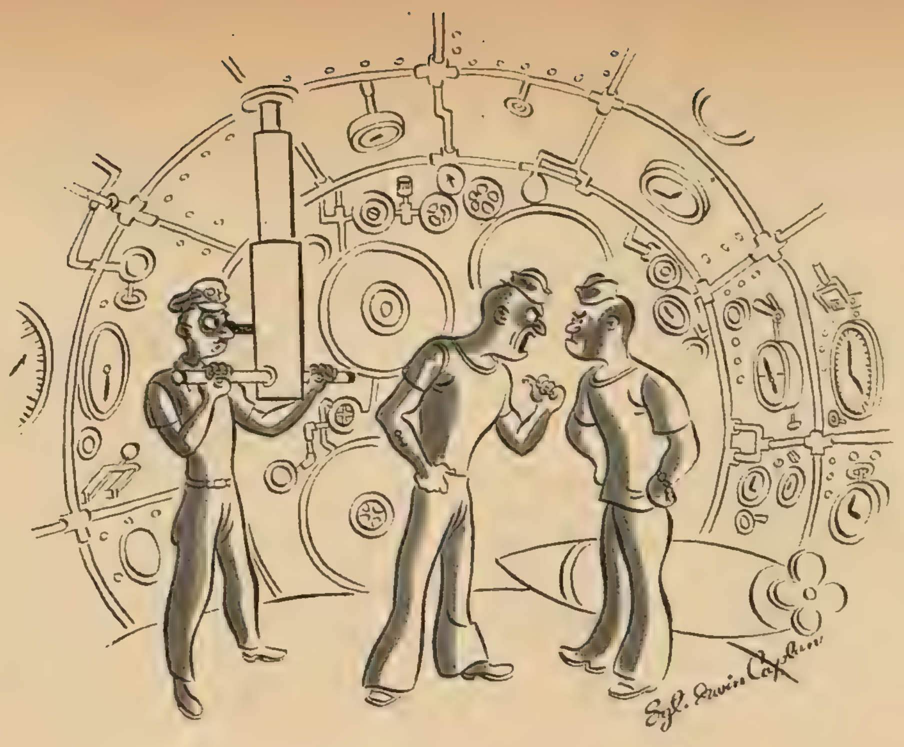

"Step outside and say that!"

The two walked outside and lit cigarettes. Finally Jake said, "You done a good thing, Howie. A guy oughta own his own place. It makes you think different. Me, I never had a chance. Right after me and Grace got married I lost my job. So we moved in with the folks. Now I work plenty overtime and make good money; but I'm scared. We could move now, sure, but when things slow down again we'd have to move back."

"I guess."

They were silent for a few minutes, then Jake exploded, "Damn it, what's it get a man? I work my can off and I try to be a decent husband, and the whole thing's a mess. We live in this lousy shack and we'll die in this lousy shack. I coast along with the other guys and keep my nose clean in the hiring hall, and still I don't go nowhere. When there's stuff to be moved on the docks I got the strong back to move it with. And when there's nothin' to be moved I chisel a couple bucks and sit in the kitchen and drink gin and raise hell with Grace for no reason at all. Now there's the kid to think about." His shoulders drooped and he turned to look at his younger brother. He repeated, "You done a good thing, Howie."

"It looks like it. But I was just thinkin' about Ma. This little house I got is such a nice place, all clean and painted—"

Jake slapped his shoulder with rough good nature. "Forget it, kid. Slip Ma a few bucks whenever you can spare it, but that's the best you can do. If you took in Ma you'd have to take the old man, too. Then, when the war ends, you'd most likely have me and Grace and the kid in with you and maybe Bill and Ernie. Don't you start takin' nobody in with you. Start that once and there's no end to it."

NEXT day Howie ate dinner in the restaurant where Rose worked. She avoided his table and another waitress served him; but when he was sipping his coffee, Rose came to his table with an older man.

She looked down at him and said, "Weren't you in the Signal Corps?" Howie nodded. Rose said, "That's what I thought. This man is Mr. Merrill. He's a lineman with the telephone company. Maybe you two got something you could talk about."

Rose turned about and walked away. Howie got up and shook hands with Mr. Merrill and then the two sat down. Merrill grinned and said, "That's some girl you have. Know how I met her? I was working up on a pole this morning and she stopped on the sidewalk and wanted to talk with me. She said she had a friend she would like me to give some advice to. So I promised to have dinner here tonight. She took my check. Some gal."

HOWIE appraised the other. He was middle-aged and stocky, but his eyes were clear, his physique was powerful, and there was about him the confident manner of the skilled technician.

Howie leaned back. "I don't know what advice you could give me, mister."

The man shrugged. "I kind of got the idea you were looking for a job."

"Oh, that. Sure." Howie frowned then and stared at him. "Say, do you think maybe I could get a job like yours?"

Merrill chuckled. "You can't tell. If you were with the Signal Corps you must at least know how to string a wire."

Howie leaned over the table, interested and excited. "Geez, I never thought of this. I don't know if I'd fit or not. I was mostly in combat zones, stringing wire, setting up field-telephone posts—"

"Any repair work?"

Howie laughed. "Cripes, yes! In a combat zone you can't keep anything working more'n a few minutes. Then I set up teletype systems in the islands, and once rigged up a whole power station on a captured airport. It wasn't a big outfit, but I ran the whole job myself. All the officers was killed."

Merrill nodded. He got up from the table and shook hands with a laugh. "You don't need advice from me, son. You go down to the personnel office of the telephone company in the morning and they'll kiss you on both cheeks. Good men are scarce any time. I hope I get you on my truck. So long and good luck."

Howie wanted to talk to Rose after Merrill had gone, but she had disappeared.

He went to the telephone office in the morning and was there until noon. Later he went to the local of the union electricians. At two in the afternoon he stood on the corner of Market Street. He saw Rose coming down the sidewalk, swinging a patent-leather purse, her heels clicking on the concrete. Servicemen whistled at her and she smiled and waved to them all. But when she saw Howie and came to a halt, her smile disappeared.

She tried to step by him, but he grabbed her arm. "You're not going to work today. You're going with me. I got something for you to see."

Rose placed her free hand on her hip and stared into his face. "Since when are you running my life? I don't take time off from work for nobody. Hear?"

"You're still coming with me."

"Oh, yeah?"

"Yeah. Or else I'll start a row right here and get the both of us pinched. Are you coming along peaceful-like?"

Rose looked away. "All right, Howie."

They boarded a streetcar going up Market Street, then transferred to a street bus that let them off at the foot of the Dolores hill. As they walked up the hill Rose smiled. "It's nice here, isn't it?"

Howie stopped in front of the little house and opened the gate for Rose.

She gave him a puzzled glance, but stepped into the yard and walked up the steps to the porch. Howie unlocked the door and the puzzle in Rose's face deepened. They stepped into the front room. Howie closed the door, looked at Rose.

"Like it?" he asked.

She frowned at him, then walked slowly through the house and examined each room. The beds were all made, the pilot light was burning in the gas range, and there was food in the cooler and in the icebox on the screened porch. Rose tentatively opened some closets. They were bare, except for one flowered house dress with the price tag still on it.

She leaned back against the sink and placed her trembling hands on the drainboard. "Well, Howie?"

He lit a cigarette and almost shouted, "I asked you if you liked it."

She said quietly, "It's beautiful."

"O. K., O. K. That's all I wanted to know."

"I—I like it, Howie."

"Sure." He took a deep breath and faced her. "Well, we own it. I got your name on the deed. It's made out to Mr. Howard and Mrs. Rose Patterson. You gotta sign some papers later. But it's all fixed," he hastened to add. "And the loan only costs me thirty-eight bucks a month. That's cheaper'n rent. Besides, I got a job, a good job. With the telephone company. They took me on this morning. I work thirty days on probation, then I'm a regular lineman and there's no telling where a guy can go after that. The manager told me—"

SHE had her hands over her face and was crying. He took her shoulder gently in his hands. "Aw, look, Rose—"

She twisted away from him and backed along the sink. "You don't want me!" she cried. "You're crazy! You do everything just right and then you do a thing like this. So you're going places. So you'll amount to something. But not with me you won't. You hear? I'm an alley cat. Every guy in uniform along the Embarcadero knows me. This sweater I wear, the way I make up—"

Howie's face turned red. He grabbed Rose and spun her about and held her by the sink. He turned on the water. Soaked a cloth and washed her face as she screamed and kicked at him. When he had finished scrubbing, he stepped back and threw the house dress at her.

"Now," he shouted, "put this on!"

He went into the living room. He lit a cigarette and threw it into the small fireplace and lit another. A sound turned him about. Rose was standing demurely in the doorway wearing the house dress and with her hair pulled back from a shining face. Howie held out his arms.

Rose ran into his arms and buried her face in his shoulder. "Oh, Howie, I'm crazy about you! Honest I am."

He hugged her and spoke into her hair. "Then what's all the shouting about? We've already come a long way."

Rose sighed and nodded.

THE END

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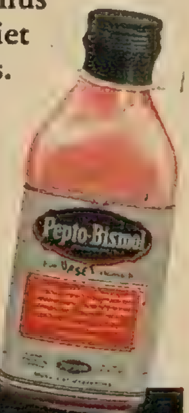

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BESSIE ARBRUSTER SNAGS A WHUPPERSNAPPER

Continued from Page 29

demanded. "Is that what he's been up to?"

"Nope," said Shorty, cringing. "It ain't that."

Bessie gnawed on a fingernail thoughtfully.

"Was he to market this mornin'?" she asked, suddenly.

"I ain't sayin', Bessie."

"Well, by cripes!" Bessie shouted. "I'll fix his galluses. Him what cheats gits cheated on. Help yerself t' beer, Shorty. I'm a-gonna be busy."

TRIXIE DUNBAR, editor of the Tidewater Times, Barkentine Island's weekly medium of gossip and water-front doings, sat bolt upright in bed, said "Hello," and then reached for the phone.

"Oh-h-h," she muttered sleepily, "Bessie. What a time to wake a guy up! Will I go fishing? You scoundrel, you've been up all night with Doc Harrison."

She listened for a moment and her eyes brightened.

"I get it," she said, and there was a touch of excitement in her voice. "Sure I'll go. Look, I'll bring Loring along. The more fishermen, the more fish. Sure he's here. So's mother. Get your mind out of the bilge. See you in—ah—forty-five minutes. 'By."

And one hour later, as a hazy but hot sun boosted itself lazily over the mist-streaked horizon of Arbruster Bay, the Lark was purring merrily toward Weakfish Thoroughfare. Aboard her were Bessie, Trixie, and Loring Bigelow, young dentist from Philadelphia who had more than a passing interest in Trixie.

The Lark throbbed across Barkentine Channel and headed for the inlet.

"Wish old sawbones was along," Bessie grumbled.

"Well," comforted Trixie, "he's protecting your interests at the pier. And something tells me they need protecting."

"You're right," agreed Loring. "I'd like to get that Pedigo in my chair sometime."

They churned over the rip at the inlet and Bessie broke out the field glasses and trained them on Pedigo's Pier, about three miles south. Her heart sank a little as she observed that the pier was literally sagging under the weight of two hundred or more fishermen. Bessie was able to distinguish Doc Harrison, barging around and among the anglers, checking the catch.

Bessie had introduced Doc to the art of bay and channel fishing after restrictions were tightened on "outside" angling. As an angler he held her in high esteem. As a woman he considered her a great sport and an effective salve to his moods.

Bessie nosed the Lark between two sand bars, following a course that only she knew as a thread follows a needle.

They bounced past the breaker line and Bessie took a hitch in her dungarees. Technically they were in violation of Coast Guard regulations which forbade navigation beyond the breaker line without special permission. But Bessie's Lark served as a Coast Guard auxiliary craft, and unless they were actually caught bringing in fish, she expected no trouble.

"Quo vadis?" Loring inquired.

Bessie looked swiftly around.

"Where?" she inquired anxiously.

Loring chuckled. "Whither," he translated, "goest thou? Where we bound, skipper?"

"The Chasm," said Bessie, and winked.

Loring looked perplexed.

"It's a fishermen's paradise," explained Trixie. "It's about two miles out and lies between a huge sand bar and a mud bank. The bed of the bar drops off suddenly from about ten feet to a hundred feet. Right, Bessie?"

Bessie nodded vigorously.

"Good breedin' 'n' feedin' grounds," she added. "Got flounder, croaker, porgies, and some mighty big channel bass."

She didn't mention the fact, however, that the Chasm was also a breeding place for treacherous currents, and the grave of many a small boat trapped there during a squall.

Bessie cut motor a few minutes later, glancing shoreward to check tide and wind. The wind, which was slight, she fixed by the beaks of the gulls; the tide by floating seaweed. Then she cast anchor toward shore. The anchor would lodge on the sand bar and the Lark would drift over the Chasm.

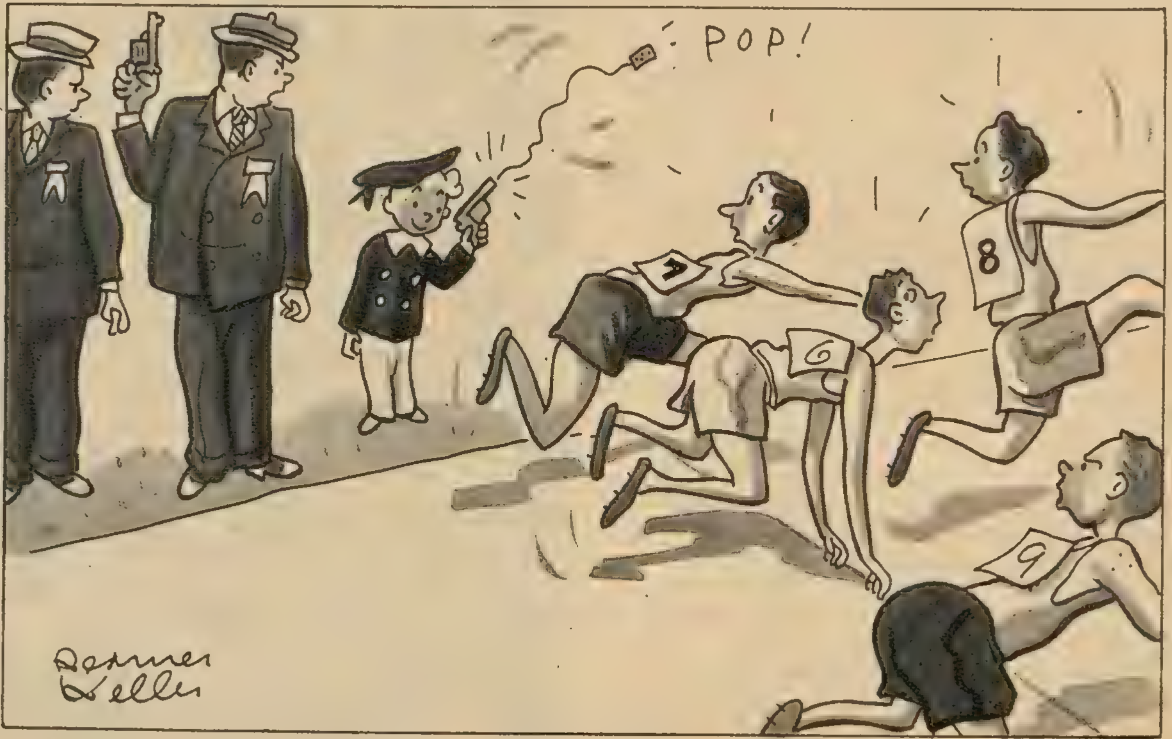
"Over lines, lubbers," Bessie ordered, "and make 'em big ones."

Trixie's sinker had barely struck bottom before she had a strike.

"Keep its head up," sang Bessie. "Bring 'er in, Toots!"

It was a sand shark, weighing close to eight pounds.

HARDTACK



"They all count," Bessie grinned. "If that half-baked eel of a Pedigo kin cheat, we kin do the same."

Meanwhile Loring, red in the face, struggled with something that took line even against a heavily set star drag. Bessie grabbed his line and gave it a test tug.

"One of them goblins," she said. "But bring 'er in."

It proved to be a wickedly large spider crab, one of the ugliest, meanest denizens of the deep.

"At least ten pounds," Bessie estimated. "Whoops! Everything that comes out o' the sea counts 'at's alive."

BESSIE handed her rod to Loring and entered the cabin. When she emerged she was carrying a huge ball of tar-treated twine to which was attached a hook that looked as if it belonged to a towing chain. On the hook she wrapped a whole mossbunker and attached a ten-ounce dipsey.

"Bigger the bait, bigger the fish," she grinned, lowering the bunker over the port side. "I aims to snag me a big drum."

For about ten minutes there was a lull, typical of all salt-water fishing. The three of them, mellow from inhaling salt-marsh tonic, thought their thoughts in drowsy silence. Occasionally Trixie, stretched out full length on the cabin roof, would slap viciously at a greenhead. Loring yawned noisily.

"Holy cow!" Bessie roared, and landed on the deck with a painful thud as her canvas chair collapsed.

But she retained her grip on the cord, which had pulled her wrist over the gunwale.

The cord suddenly tightened and Bessie's face became a bright pink as she struggled.

"Cripes!" she shouted. "It's a whale! Gimme a hand!"

Trixie and Loring dropped their rods and slued across the deck. They, too, seized the cord and helped Bessie to pull. The action at the other end of the line was mystifying. One moment there would be a heavy drag, the next the line would go slack.

"If it ever sounds," gasped Bessie, after they had battled with the unknown for nearly five minutes, "we'll all sound wid it."

For perhaps two minutes no one spoke as they hauled in line. Then Bessie leaned over the gunwale and peered into the water.

"Good guppy!" she muttered in awe. "It's the devil!"

Trixie glanced into the green depths and a short scream escaped her.

The thing was unreal. It seemed to be moving up the line like a berserk monkey. For fins it had two ugly inflated briefcases. Its nose was a wart-speckled pink tube. Its eyes were bloated goggles.

The thing broke surface as they stared, pop-eyed and paralyzed. Then Loring shouted:

"Bessie! Give a hand. It's a man. A man with a Momsen lung. Quick!"

A pair of brawny arms extended toward the Lark. Bessie and Loring grabbed them.

Loring ripped the artificial lung off the man's face and then he and Bessie heaved. Their victim came over the rail like a sack of potatoes and sprawled on the deck. Loring gently turned him over.

He was gasping and choking. Words tumbled incoherently between frothy lips.

"Ge-glug—get," the man blurted, and then coughed.

"Take it easy, fellow," said Loring.

"He's wearing swimming trunks," observed Trixie. "Do you suppose—"

"S-submarine," the man gasped. "P-porpoise. G-get help."

Bessie was instantly alert.

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"Porpoise is test divin' out o' Tuckerton," she said. "D'ya think maybe—"

"Get base," the man blurted. "Thirty-four men below. Ballast tanks jammed. G-get base."

Trixie grabbed Bessie's big arm.

"The wireless," she said excitedly. "I'll contact the Tuckerton base."

Bessie looked miserable.

"'Tain't workin'," she said. "It's been busted ever since those bums went off near the Lark."

Loring scratched his head. Then he glanced skyward.

"I've got it!" he said suddenly. "Heliograph. Got a mirror, Trix?"

Trixie grabbed her pocketbook, which lay beneath a life preserver. She found the inevitable mirror.

"O. K.," said Loring. "Bessie, send up a flare. A detonation flare, if you've got one."

Tuckerton, as the gull flies, is about four miles from the Chasm. As Bessie ignited the fuse on the flare, Trixie trained the glasses on the rolling sand dunes near the Tuckerton Coast Guard base. The flare ripped skyward with a vibrating *v-room-m!* The orange pellet exploded and the reverberation caused thousands of gulls, warming their eggs in the grassy dunes on the Chasm sand bar, to take wing.

LORING put a kapok pillow under the head of their patient and gave him a shot of brandy. His normal color seemed to be slowly returning. Bessie leaned over to look at him.

"Cripes!" she burst out. "It's the whuppersnapper!"

The man raised himself weakly on one elbow.

"For God's sake," he urged, "notify the base. There's thirty-four men below and the air's getting poisonous. The escape hatch is jammed, too. We rammed the Chasm bank. I—I took a Brodie on the torpedo tube."

Trixie made a grab for Bessie's arm.

"They heard the flare," she said. "Four guardsmen are on the beach. They've got glasses trained on us."

"All right," said Loring quietly. "You know the code, Trix. It's up to you. Flash 'em an S O S with the mirror. Here, use my cap to black out between letters."

With trembling fingers, Trixie took the mirror and directed its silver surface toward Tuckerton. She held the mirror in her left hand and, with the aid of the cap, signaled three dots, three dashes and three dots. Then she slowly spelled out P-O-R-P-O-I-S-E. Meanwhile Bessie trained her glasses on the guardsmen to watch their reaction.

"They're gittin' it," said Bessie. "One of 'em just went highballin' up to the beach phone. He's puttin' in a call."

Trixie signaled three dots, two dots, and a dash, a dash and three dots. More dots and dashes.

"International Code? Right?" asked Loring. "You signaled 'Sub sunk here.'"

"Right," agreed Trixie. "How'd you know?"

"I'm studying it. Part of Civil Air Patrol duties."

Bessie let out a roar.

"Here they come! Three skeeter boats. And a PC-450 bringin' up the rear. Look at them babies churn!"

She handed the glasses to the erstwhile whuppersnapper — Ensign Tucker — and lifted him bodily into a standing position.

"Thank God," he said weakly, and Bessie lowered him to his pillow.

"Mister," said Bessie, "there's thirty-four others can thank God and thank you too. The Coast Guard's got divers on them boats. An' I love you like a brudder—"

Bessie's worn gum boots squealed in anguish as she knelt down on the deck and planted a loud moist kiss on the perspiring brow of Ensign Tucker.

THE big clock in Barkentine First Church steeple had just bonged two mournful strokes when the screen door slammed at Angler's Inn and Commander Crosby walked in.

The slam brought an abrupt climax to what appeared to be festivities.

Doc Harrison had been talking. Bessie Arbruster was slapping her bulging hips and roaring with laughter. Loring and Trixie were holding hands and joining in the mirth. Shorty was busily filling beer glasses at the bar. No one else was around.

"H'rumph-h-h," said Doc. "Evening, commander."

The commander's lips were straight lines.

"One buttermilk, Shorty," Bessie sang out. "An' sling out a cup o' coffee fer me."

The commander studied the group briefly, and a deep frown pursed his leathery forehead.

"Ah—have a seat, sir," suggested Loring.

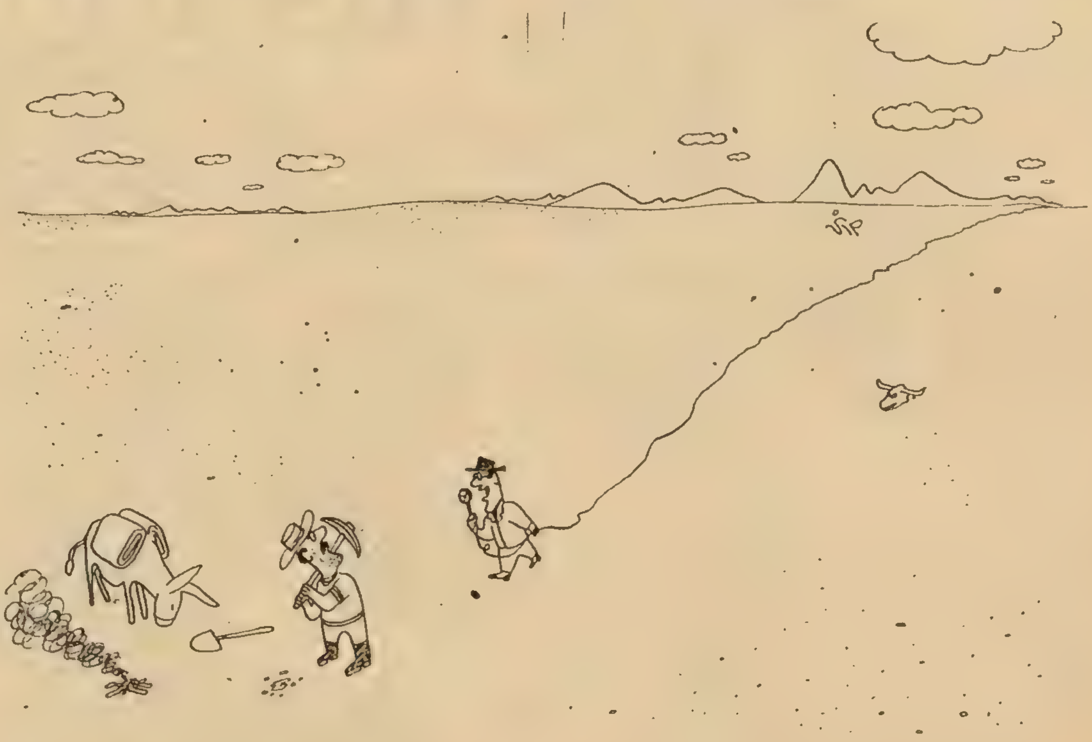
Commander Crosby cleared his throat.

"I thought I'd find you all here," he said.

"Buttermilk, Shorty," roared Bessie.

Shorty sideslipped forward with a fresh glass of buttermilk, which he thrust into Crosby's hands.

"Doctor Harrison," said Crosby shortly, "I'd like you to explain the riot at Pedigo's



"Ah, folks, here's an interesting old character. . . ."

Pier this afternoon. These civilian disturbances are most irritating. And—by the way—is he here? I saw his station wagon outside."

Doc shook his gray head slowly.

"Well," he began, "it's this way, commander. That ornery toadfish, Elmer, was being used by Pedigo to—"

"Who's Elmer?" snapped Crosby.

"Elmer's the Greek chef at the pier," continued Doc amiably. "As I was saying, there was a fish-catching contest on between Bessie and Pedigo. Pedigo bought about five hundred pounds of fish in Atlantic City, and Elmer was hidden under the pier, fastening those fish on the lines."

"Well?" interrupted Crosby. The lines in his face were relaxing.

"Well," said Doc, "seems like Elmer got tangled in one of the lines. His sweater got caught on the hook and he was hauled out from under the pier. That wised me up to what I had already suspected. Pedigo and I had words."

"Yes?" said Crosby, leaning forward.

"Yes," said Doc. "And while Pedigo and I were arguing, seems as though he lost his balance somehow and fell off the pier. Most amazing accident, sir. And when he tried to climb back—I heard—someone pounded his fingers with an oar until he paid his bet."

"And the bet?" inquired Crosby, smiling.

Doc Harrison fumbled in a jacket pocket, withdrew a large diamond ring and handed it to Bessie.

"She won," explained Doc. "I was judge and Pedigo was disqualified. She also won his station wagon. It's out front."

"Cripes!" said Bessie, staring at the ring. "I didn't know that you got this, too, Doc."

"It's yours—and honestly come by," said Doc.

"Why certainly 'tis," she agreed. "The bet was on weight of live stuff hauled out o' the ocean. An' when I was talkin' to the Tuckerton base by phone a few minutes ago they told me that thirty-four men was hauled out o' the Porpoise. That's over five thousand pounds. Remember—Pedigo said 'anything that's alive!' "

THE commander roared with delight. "Bessie," he said, "you're good for my liver, my kidneys, and my pituitary gland. And I must explain. The real reason I dropped in was to advise all you people that the Porpoise has surfaced, but Bessie beat me to it."

"It was wonderful news, commander," said Trixie. Her eyes were shining.

"Yes," added Crosby, "the divers managed to open the escape hatch and all the men surfaced with Momsens. Then, later, the divers repaired the ballast tanks and surfaced her."

"Ye-up," agreed Bessie. "It's the nuts."

"By the way," Crosby said, "a gentleman will be dropping off to see all you people tomorrow night at ten o'clock. Make sure you are here. He wishes to meet you. Bessie, in particular."

"Eh?" said Bessie.

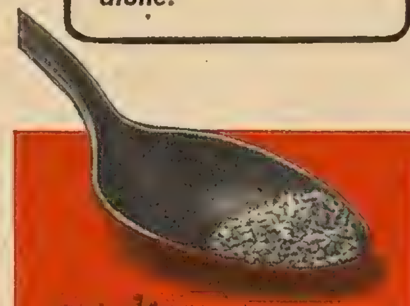
"Yes," said Crosby. "His name is Mr. Forrestal. He's heard all about you and he's making a special trip up here from Cape May, where he's conducting a tour of inspection. And now"— the commander drained his buttermilk—"I'll say good luck and smooth sailing. Good night, folks, and thanks again."

"Wait—" began Bessie, but Crosby was already at the screen door and he didn't look back.

Bessie pursed her lips and her sharp blue eyes bored into Doc Harrison's.

"Doc," she said curiously, "I oncet knew an ol' clam digger by the name o' Forrestal. Him and me had sharp words over riparian rights. D'ya suppose—?"

THE END



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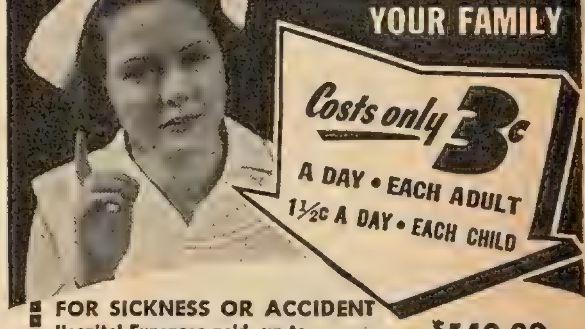

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Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

WELL TAKEN CARE OF: Artist Russell Patterson tells a story about his friend, Walter Thornton, who is agent for many of New York's loveliest models. Ten years ago Russell went to work on a show and, wishing to place one of his best models during the time he would be busy, telephoned Walter, described her glowingly, and got his pal to promise he would take care of her if she came to see him. A few months later Russell encountered Walter and asked what became of the model. "I took care of her, all right," said Walter. "I married her." Now she not only helps manage her husband's agency—she is the mother of a nine-year-old girl, who is a promising pianist.

VERY SPECIAL WACS: Private Grace E. Osborne of California is the mother of Lieutenant Colonel William L. Osborne, who escaped from the Japanese in the Philippines to serve with Lieutenant General Joseph Stilwell in Burma. Private Osborne is taking her basic training at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. . . . Ingvarda Johansen stated, when qualifying for United States citizenship, that she would be willing to bear arms for the country. Within four hours after she swore allegiance to the nation, she enlisted in the WAC. She left Los Angeles recently for Des Moines to start her training.

HIGH POINTS IN FALL FASHIONS: At the I. J. Fox annual fur fashion preview, gorgeous furs and gorgeous models did right by one another, while Lisa Sergio intoned her benedictions on raccoon dyed to simulate stone marten, skunk dyed to simulate baum marten, mink dyed to simulate sable, along with the ever popular black Persian, actually dyed to look like black Persian. Voluminous sleeves added to the cost and lushness of many daytime coats, while huge stoles and muffs vied with fur-lined satin coats to make evening ensembles as opulent as Secretary Morgenthau, with his eye on the 20 per cent luxury tax, could ask. Taxes are included in the price tags, to deaden the pain for the customer. There was an incredible coat of silver-blue mink, bred in Wisconsin. You may be too late to see it, or buy it, since there was just the one, but if you haven't $25,000 to put on your back, you might just as well blink back the tears, for that was the price. Very soft and glamorous were the "American Imperial" chinchilla coats and stoles made of the descendants of eleven chinchillas trapped in the South American Andes, twenty-one years ago. The 6,000 pairs bred from the original eleven are a monument not only to the chinchilla's unbridled fertility but to the American farmer's zeal in raising this delicate animal in its comparatively new habitat. . . . Betty Betz, whose husband, Josef Lanz, has popularized the peasant influence in America, is now a full-fledged designer in her own right. Under the name of "Teen Age Betty," she presented her ensnaring dresses at a press fashion show in her Manhattan penthouse. Her bolero suits, drawstring blouses, gay petticoats with fetching camisoles would make any teen-ager glad to look young instead of torturing Mamma for slinky black satin. The five cute models who displayed her clothes were teen-age themselves, and looked especially fetching when they tripped barefoot around the terrace in gay, elongated blouses, which came to their knees, and which were first shown under full, drawstring skirts. The smart notion behind this trick was to give a schoolgirl an outfit part of which she could doff at home, so that she could study in comfort and save her skirt from unnecessary wrinkles.

RESPITE

When brisk September comes to town,
And tawny leaves come fluttering down,
We'll bid farewell to all the dregs
Of bottled hosiery for legs.
And since so much of it was smeary,
We'll find the sight of stockings cheery.

IMPETUOUS STORK: Early one morning, twenty-six-year-old Mrs. Virginia Romano, of 136 Boerum Street, Brooklyn, decided she was about to become a mother. Her husband had left for work. Mrs. Romano hurried her seven-year-old son, Joseph, next door to the Children's Day and Night Shelter, where officers took the boy for safekeeping, and sent two nurses out with Mrs. Romano in search of a cab. After a frenzied fifteen minutes and still no cab, the situation looked acute and the women flagged a private car. The driver stopped, took the trio aboard, and before he dropped them at the Swedish Hospital, his passenger list had increased from three to five. The nurses delivered a girl in the back seat of the speeding car, and Dr. Nathaniel Koplow, resident physician, and Miss Gudrun Lund, supervising nurse in obstetrics, delivered a boy on the same back seat a few seconds after the little group coasted into the hospital courtyard. Just to polish things off with a flourish, Mrs. Romano had another daughter in the hospital elevator. All three triplets arrived in less than half an hour. The two girls weighed five pounds each; the boy four pounds.

TIN FISH FOR TOKYO

Continued from Page 34

are supposed to plaster the target just ahead of the torpedo planes, in order to shake up the gun crews so the torpedo bombers will have a better chance of getting in."

That's precisely what happened. Just as the torpedo bombers straightened toward their runs, corkscrewing up and down at low altitude in diversionary action, the final bomb exploded on the deck of the Ruykaku. She was smoking badly, but still moving fast under good control. Now the torpedo planes swarmed forward from every point of the compass. Pilots began to stare through their sights, preparatory to loosing their missiles.

"I was about one thousand yards out when I dropped my fish," Commander Farrington said, "and I saw two other torpedoes hit along with mine. A minute later the Yorktown's torpedo planes struck. The Jap carrier by this time was alive with flames and smoke. When we were about fifteen miles away, the smoke suddenly doused out. Just eight minutes after the action began, the Ruykaku was on the bottom. That's what our torpedo bombers hope and expect to do to every Jap ship still afloat."

Until 1941, the Navy had made all of its own torpedoes in Navy plants at Newport, Rhode Island, and Alexandria, Virginia. The torpedo, with its 3,000 parts and an internal mechanism far more delicate than a watch, had been considered far too complex a machine for mass output. But with the mounting possibility of Japanese attack, officials decided that if private industry couldn't step up our output of tin fish, the Navy might well be sunk, both literally and figuratively.

In this crisis Naval Ordnance called in officials of the American Can Company, which in 1941 made about half the 18,000,000,000 tin cans manufactured in this country. The tin can and the torpedo would seem to have about as much relationship as a mouth organ and a machine gun. Yet both are made of metal. And there was little the American Can Company didn't know about metal working after thirty-eight years of producing steel-bodied, tin-coated cans, and building the intricate machinery with which to make them. It had seven huge machine shops and fifty-eight can-making plants scattered throughout America.

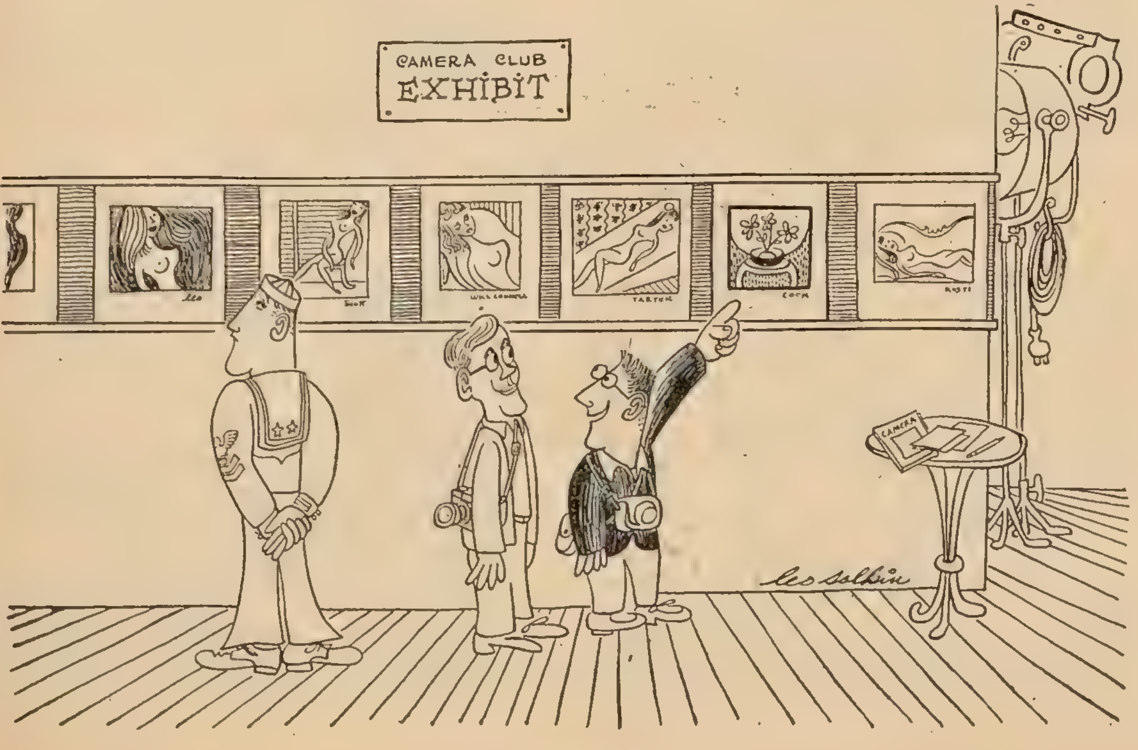
A few months before Pearl Harbor, "Canco" agreed to build and operate a mammoth new Navy-financed torpedo plant at Chicago through a subsidiary, Amertorp Corporation. When the Japs struck in December, Canco also agreed to convert a new can plant at St. Louis to the same job. Roughly, the two factories would cost approximately $30,000,000. St. Louis would manufacture aerial and submarine torpedoes; Chicago would turn out tin fish for both surface craft and planes. Few wartime assignments held more thorny problems.

Immediately, 200 of Canco's top engineers and draftsmen descended on the Navy's torpedo factory at Newport to figure out how to transform the custom-made Navy torpedo to a mass-production item, like an alarm clock. This meant designing and constructing hundreds of entirely new machine tools for the two plants, setting up thousands of time-load studies, and drawing tens of thousands of blueprints. Later, time-load studies, machine tools, and parts were furnished to International Harvester to enable that company to get quickly into production. Harvester and Pontiac Motors, like American Can, have for some time been producing torpedoes in quantities which would have seemed incredible only a few years ago.

AT the outset, Naval Ordnance officials stated that if any factory could produce its first torpedo within eighteen months after completion of the plant, it would be considered good performance. Actually, the first torpedo from Chicago's American Can factory was turned out less than ten months after steam shovels began excavating for the foundations!

Recently I visited the Amertorp plant at Forest Park, a Chicago suburb, to observe the startling methods which enable us to mass-produce torpedoes. For hours I wandered with a guide through twenty-eight acres of plant space. There were more than 6,000 employees and some of the most intricate machines known to man. Specially built internal grinders, nearly as long and heavy as freight locomotives, chewed out the interiors of rough steel forgings to make sections of the torpedo body. Giant lathes gnawed at other sections. Near by, still other machines, infinitely delicate, polished gyroscope bearings, to such glistening perfection that not even the most minute surface scratch was

(Continued on page 80)



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LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

BY EVE STANLEY

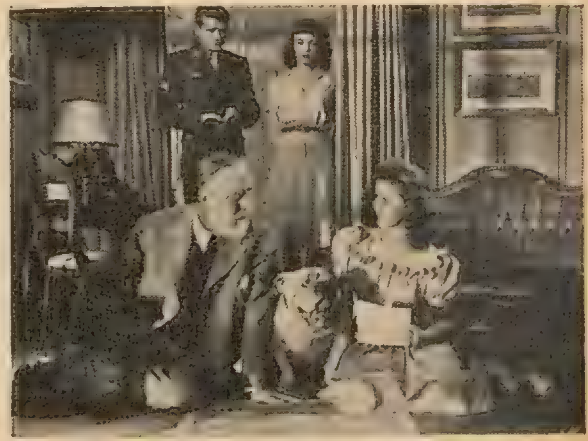
Captain Hilton's womenfolk find solace for wartime loneliness in his letters.

SINCE YOU WENT AWAY

(United Artists) Claudette Colbert, Jennifer Jones, Joseph Cotten, Shirley Temple

ANOTHER epoch-making war, another non-stop script (nearly three hours), and another Milky Way of stars and supers have placed David Selznick's new picture smack in the foreground of public attention—and with good reason. It's about a subject of vital interest—the American home in wartime. It's got such top-notch names as Claudette Colbert, Jennifer Jones, Joseph Cotten, Shirley Temple, Monty Woolley, and Robert Walker—each one an unmistakable type. Placed in juxtaposition, against a background of familiar activity, splendidly photographed, and touched up with superb detail, these ingratiating characters achieve a startling semblance to reality—the kind of life most Americans like to believe most other Americans are living. Topped with a script loaded to the gun'ls with tearful emotional climaxes the combination is likely to snatch your most personal wartime feelings unawares.

1 Lt. Tony Willett (Joseph Cotten), a family friend, is the idol of the Hilton girls (Shirley Temple and Jennifer Jones).



2 The Hiltons' crusty wartime lodger (Monty Woolley) mysteriously ignores his grandson Bill (Robert Walker).

3 Jane Hilton, who has restored Bill's lost faith in himself, suddenly finds she's sending her heart overseas with him.

4 Personal anxiety and pain do not prevent the Hiltons from sharing hope and cheer with their guests at Christmas time.

THE CANTERVILLE GHOST *(M-G-M) Charles Laughton, Robert Young, Margaret O'Brien*

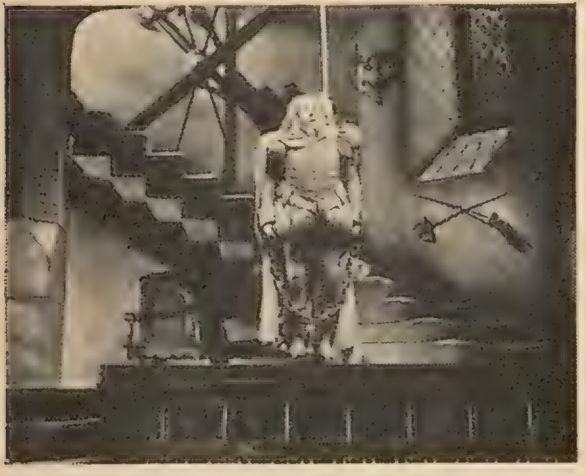
HERE'S a light, gleeful fantasy of the first order. Charles Laughton's languishing ghost is such an authentic bit of wistful ectoplasm, it's no wonder little Margaret O'Brien (as his modern-day descendant) and American Ranger Robert Young become involved in his supernatural affairs before they know it. When the Rangers come to be quartered in the aristocratic little lady's English castle, the family spook turns out his whole bagful of grisly tricks—and betrays his own secret. The refreshing jollity of the script is deftly mingled with tenderness and the naïve faith which Margaret O'Brien instinctively radiates (even when made to act like a grown-up's idea of Margaret O'Brien). If you look too closely you may also detect a rather unmannerly jibe at English tradition—but just keep your eye on that ghost (complete with some nifty trick photography) and enjoy a romp with your own imagination.

1 Teatime manners baffle some of the American Rangers when little Lady Jessica entertains them at the castle.

2 Jeepers—the Canterville Ghost! You don't *have* to believe this. The hard-boiled Rangers didn't either, until—

3 —Well, being told about a spook is one thing. *Meeting* one is another—as Robert Young and his pals soon find out.

4 The boys don't get much sleep in the castle, what with a ghost chase going on, and tin suits clanking around after dark.



5 Hold everything—it's just that ancestral spook again, trying to scare the boys. But he's in for a big surprise.

6 Robert Young will have to move fast if he's going to keep that live bomb from blowing everybody to kingdom come.

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

DOUBLE INDEMNITY (Paramount). Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck. Drama.

DRAGON SEED (M-G-M). Katharine Hepburn, Walter Huston, Aline McMahon. A superb treatment of Pearl Buck's novel about wartime China.

GASLIGHT (M-G-M). Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten. Drama.

GOING MY WAY (Paramount). Bing Crosby, Risë Stevens, Barry Fitzgerald. Drama with music.

HAIL THE CONQUERING HERO (Paramount). Eddie Bracken, Ella Raines. Comedy.

MR. SKEFFINGTON (Warner Bros.). Bette Davis, Claude Rains. Drama.

TWO GIRLS AND A SAILOR (M-G-M). Van Johnson, June Allyson, Gloria De Haven. Musical.

INSIDE ★ Paramount

Published Here Every 4 Weeks

A soldier we know sat through a picture and left, shouting, "that does it!"

• • •

The last we heard he was on a honeymoon. And the picture that made up his mind is

"I Love a Soldier"

It's a story of love at first *fight*, with Paulette Goddard and Sonny Tufts taking up again from "So Proudly We Hail."

• • •

Paulette's a welder by day but wilder at night.

• • •

What we mean is, wherever she goes the sparks begin to fly. That is, till she gets her mind on bigger things.

• • •

About as big as Sonny, you might say. He felt that one good kiss deserves another.

And engineering all these shenanigans is, believe it or not, Barry (Going My Way) Fitzgerald. . . . If you folks don't watch out, Barry's going to creep right into your hearts as America's most beloved actor, bar none.

• • •

"I LOVE A SOLDIER" starts off with a kiss. And from there on comes a few thousand feet of glorious fun.

• • •

Punctuated, of course, with a few well-chosen kisses. It's all because . . .

• • •

Producer-Director Mark Sandrich, of "Holiday Inn" and "So Proudly We Hail" fame, was very, very hard bit by that ol' Spring bug.

• • •

And don't forget we warned you about our Mr. Fitzgerald. He's merely terrific.

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The kidneys are Nature's chief way of taking the excess acids and waste out of the blood. They help most people pass about 3 pints a day.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may cause nagging backache, rheumatic pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness. Frequent or scanty passages with smarting and burning sometimes shows there is something wrong with your kidneys or bladder.

Don't wait! Ask your druggist for Doan's Pills, used successfully by millions for over 40 years. They give happy relief and will help the 15 miles of kidney tubes flush out poisonous waste from your blood. Get Doan's Pills.

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Here's One Of The Best Ways To Help Build Up Red Blood!

You girls who suffer from simple anemia or who lose so much during monthly periods that you feel tired, weak, "dragged out"—due to low blood iron—start *at once*—try Lydia Pinkham's TABLETS.

Pinkham's Tablets are one of the greatest blood-iron tonics you can buy for home use to help build up red blood to give more strength—in such cases. Follow label directions. *Worth trying!*

Lydia Pinkham's TABLETS

(*Continued from page 77*)

visible under 20 degrees of magnification.

From Amertorp officials, I learned that the torpedo's gyroscopic steering mechanism is so finely adjusted that the magnetic waves of the earth influence it. I saw one Canco-developed machine which reduced the filing of turbine wheels from eight hours to a matter of minutes; another device measured small parts to 1/20-millionth of an inch. Through mass production by such machines, the Chicago plant and its sister plant at St. Louis have turned out thousands of torpedoes and cut their original estimated cost of $10,000 by a considerable margin.

Toward the end of the mammoth production lines, I finally began to comprehend what makes torpedoes tick. From one cigar-shaped end to the other, the torpedo may vary from the fourteen-foot aerial length up to the twenty-four-foot type carried in a destroyer's torpedo tubes. All, however, are divided into four main sections slightly less than two feet in diameter. First comes the warhead, bearing the charge of TNT which batters in the side of enemy vessels. Behind the warhead lies a large compartment holding compressed air under 2,800 pounds to the square inch—several times the pressure carried in the most powerful locomotive boilers. It is the torpedo's main driving force.

Next is the afterbody—mechanical brain of the torpedo. Into it is fitted a complex assembly of turbines, steering apparatus, hydrostatic devices to control depth, and the gyroscope to control direction. Here, too, are the fuel tanks which will propel the tin fish for about eight miles before fuel and air are exhausted and the projectile sinks. And last comes the tail cone, housing rudders for direction and depth as well as the twin propellers which revolve in opposing directions to keep the torpedo from spinning in the water.

THE torpedo is launched by deck tubes from destroyers and PT boats and by underwater tubes from submarines. It is simply dropped from torpedo planes. The underseas goliath is driven forward by 400 horsepower developed almost instantaneously. First, a secret mechanism ignites a highly inflammable alcohol fuel spray delivered to the tiny boilers under pressure. At the same time a jet of air starts a self-regulating water pot which nozzles water on the flame to provide steam. Almost before the torpedo plane pilot has his finger off the dropping mechanism, this pounding steam has slammed into two counter-rotating turbines powering the propellers. Immediately the tin fish lashes into its deadly voyage at more than forty miles an hour.

Still more remarkable is the gyroscope which guides the torpedo. The centrifugal force exerted by this mechanism is so great that a man holding a gyro in his hand could actually suffer a broken arm if he suddenly attempted to jerk it from its set course. In the torpedo this force is used to control motors operating the vertical rudder whenever the torpedo deviates from its run. The gyro, weighing only three or four pounds, is the heart of the torpedo, and it is so delicately balanced that the single drop of oil which lubricates its flywheel must be applied with a hypodermic syringe. The weight of *two* drops would throw it off balance!

The perfection of the gyro enables the American torpedo to perform amazing feats. One is the so-called angle shot. For example, an American submarine captain glimpses a Japanese destroyer on a course paralleling his own. There is no time to swing around and point his torpedo tubes at the enemy. Quickly the captain estimates the course and speed of the destroyer. Adjustments are made. A fierce hiss of compressed air, and the torpedo leaps into the water paralleling the destroyer—apparently a futile shot. But inexorably the gyro takes hold. The torpedo swings in a long curve toward its interception point with the Jap vessel as though drawn by a magnet. In a moment another Jap ship has joined the emperor's underwater fleet!

The torpedo must also hold to a set depth. Here a hydrostatic device, sensitive to slight changes in water pressure as depth increases or decreases, comes into play. Let the torpedo change depth by a few inches, and motors immediately move horizontal rudders to hold it true.

The first "torpedoes" were what we today call mines—and were what Farragut meant when he shouted his famous "Damn the torpedoes! Go ahead!" in Mobile Bay.

The first successful *self-propelled* tin fish were not invented until 1862, when Robert Whitehead, famous Scotch engineer, designed the great-granddaddy of them all. It weighed about 300 pounds, grunted along at a poky six miles per hour by means of a compressed air engine, and carried only eighteen pounds of dynamite. Nevertheless, Whitehead's basic design still governs present-day torpedoes. Ironically enough, their first large-scale use turned out to be against the Western world when the Japs made a sneak attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur in 1904. Not until the first World War, however, did the torpedo really come into its own.

IMMEDIATELY after the battle of Midway, when all fifteen planes of the famous carrier-based Torpedo 8 squadron were shot into the sea, alarmists said that torpedo planes would never be anything but death traps. But conditions had made it impossible for Torpedo 8 to attack with fighter protection or even diversionary dive bombers to spread the enemy fire. Moreover, the TBD plane then in use carried only two .30-caliber machine guns and had a top speed of only a little more than 200 miles an hour.

Today the Grumman Avenger torpedo plane skims over the waves at about 300 miles an hour. It carries several .50-caliber machine guns in the wings, another .50 in its turret, and a .30 in its stinger underneath the tail—approximately seven times the firepower of the old TBD. The efficiency of this new plane was fully proved when fifty Avengers attacked two dozen destroyers and cruisers at Rabaul last November without losing a single plane, despite fighter opposition and terrific antiaircraft fire. Similarly, a reconstituted Torpedo 8 squadron, equipped with Avengers, in a few months torpedoed a battleship, two aircraft carriers, five heavy cruisers, four light cruisers, a destroyer, and a cargo ship, all with minor losses.

The torpedo plane has enormous advantages over the submarine. Our subs have sunk hundreds of Jap ships, war and merchant, but in battle action the submarine, slow and unwieldy, is dangerously vulnerable to destroyer attack. The torpedo bomber's flashing speed and maneuverability, plus the fact that *dozens* of such planes can be flung at a single enemy vessel from every point of the compass, make it by far the brightest new star in our Navy's aerial fleet.

Gun for gun, the Jap fleet is no match for ours. The irresistible missiles our superb torpedo bombers carry in their bellies give us an even greater edge. Small wonder that the emperor's admirals have sought to stave off a decisive fleet action. When it comes it will spell final disaster for the Japanese Navy.

THE END

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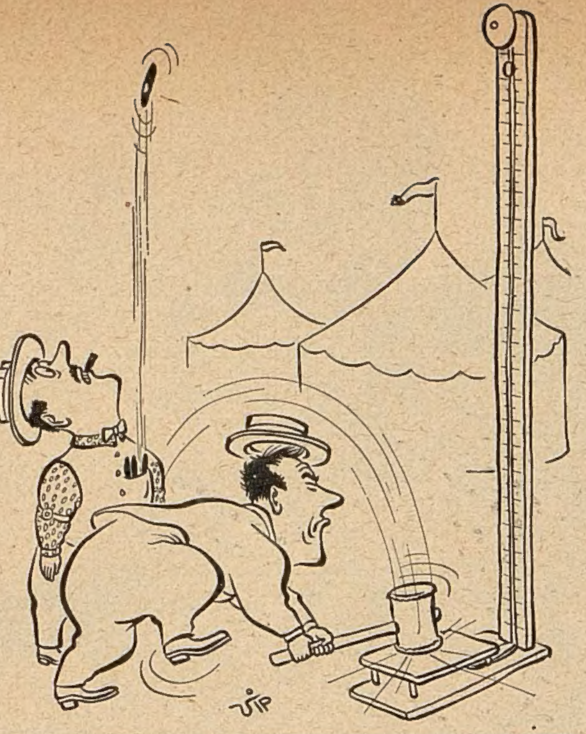

THE STRING-AND-SPIT BOYS

Continued from Page 21

equal aplomb. When the North African campaign against Rommel was nearing its final stages, some anonymous khaki-clad genius hit on a way to make good use of the fuselages of wrecked Nazi planes. He stripped the fuselage of everything but the metallic framework and then planted it in the sand, nose down. He sawed the tail section off at the last bulkhead, leaving a little platform. On it he set one of the large metal water barrels Rommel was leaving behind. The barrel was filled with water each morning from a truck, and the sun served as a heater during the day. By evening, the bizarre fixture turned out to be a warm shower, operated by the pull of a chain.

So many of those showers appeared on Allied-held fields in North Africa that it was a standard joke that this was the answer to the great question of the time: "Where is the Luftwaffe?"

And on Bougainville, after they had been bombed sixty times by the Japs, after they had been showered with 400 six-inch shells on a single day, after an interminable nightmare of hard work and diving for foxholes, the Seabees decided to do something about it. Lieutenant Sidney Mauk, C. E. C., U. S. N. R., and his machine-shop crew took the lead. From native teakwood sawed by the battalion, they coopered a fifty-gallon tub. They welded a lattice-work paddle inside a thirty-gallon stainless steel cooking kettle. They put the kettle inside the wooden tub and rigged a bearing and a shaft to rotate the kettle.

From a worn-out bulldozer they took a fan belt, and from a portable generator, a one-lunged air-cooled engine. To these they added the transmission and differential from a bomb-wrecked jeep. They connected the engine to the transmission by belt and the transmission to the differential by shaft and the differential to the inner kettle by a universal joint.

They filled the outer tub with ice, filled the cooking kettle with thirty gallons of a certain white powder mixed with water, cranked the one-lunger, put the jeep in high, and let her go.

Thirty minutes later the Fighting Builders dug into thirty gallons of the world's smoothest ice cream.

A man isn't licked when he can go through hell and come out making ice cream.

THE END

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SEPT. 9, 1944

PAUL HUNTER
Publisher
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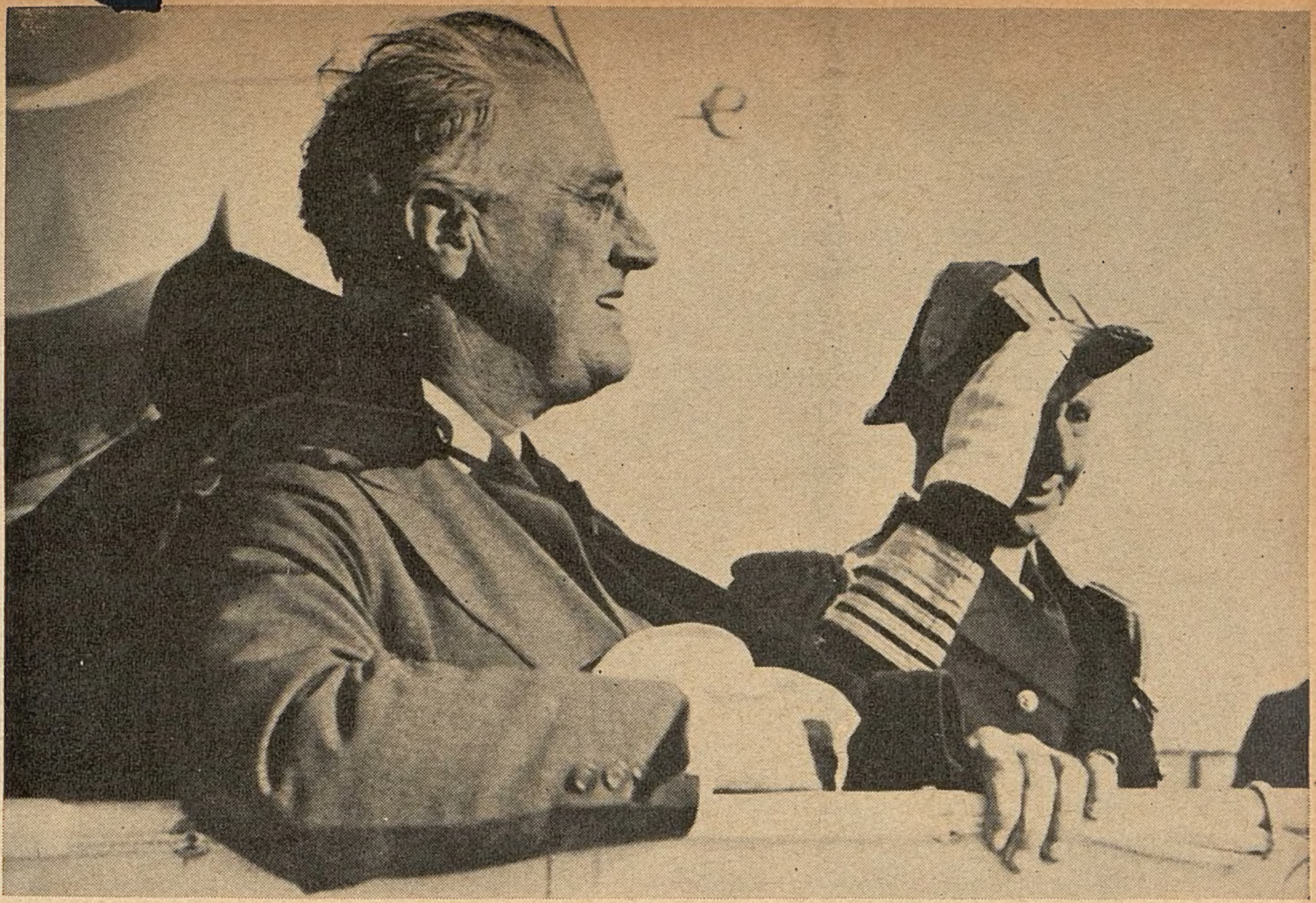

THE PRESIDENT AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S insistence on running his re-election campaign from the vantage point of commander in chief of the armed forces makes opposing orators pretty hot under the collar. The Republicans infer that F. D. R. is pulling a fast one. A great deal of oratorical breath is being expended in an effort to convince us that this commander in chief business is a lot of eyewash.

Most of this energy is being wasted because arguing in the face of fact is bound to lead to futility. The Constitution specifically designates the President as commander in chief of the armed forces and everybody knows it. Little can be accomplished by arguing in the face of this specific provision of the Constitution.

The question at issue is not whether Roosevelt is truly commander in chief but whether he is the best possible commander in chief. The operation of our war machine under his direction is not above criticism. There are many examples of waste and inefficiency. This criticism cannot and should not extend to the strategical conduct of the war. The President has little to do with the actual plans for the deployment of our military strength against the enemy. In this war, this responsibility rests upon the combined chiefs of staff. However, the President is the boss of our own top military men and as such the ultimate responsibility for success or failure rests upon him. In fact, it is imposed upon him by the Constitution. If he chooses able men, he deserves credit. If he chooses misfits, or if he chooses able men and then impedes their functioning, he deserves censure.

In assaying Mr. Roosevelt's qualifications for a fourth term, this important part of the Presidential job must be taken into consideration. Mr. Dewey has said that in the event of his election there will be no change in the leadership of our Army and Navy. This may be all well and good, but Mr. Dewey would have to shoulder immediately the top direction of America's war effort as imposed upon the President by the Constitution. Very wisely the Constitution places ultimate control of the military in the hands of a civilian. The President cannot fail to carry out this provision. Our Army and Navy leaders would find it difficult to operate without the co-ordination and guidance of a commander in chief.

Therefore, it would appear Mr. Dewey is under the necessity of convincing the country that he can successfully guide his country through the closing months of war and the period of reconstruction thereafter. Trying to disassociate the offices of President and commander in chief begs the issue.

Paul Hunter

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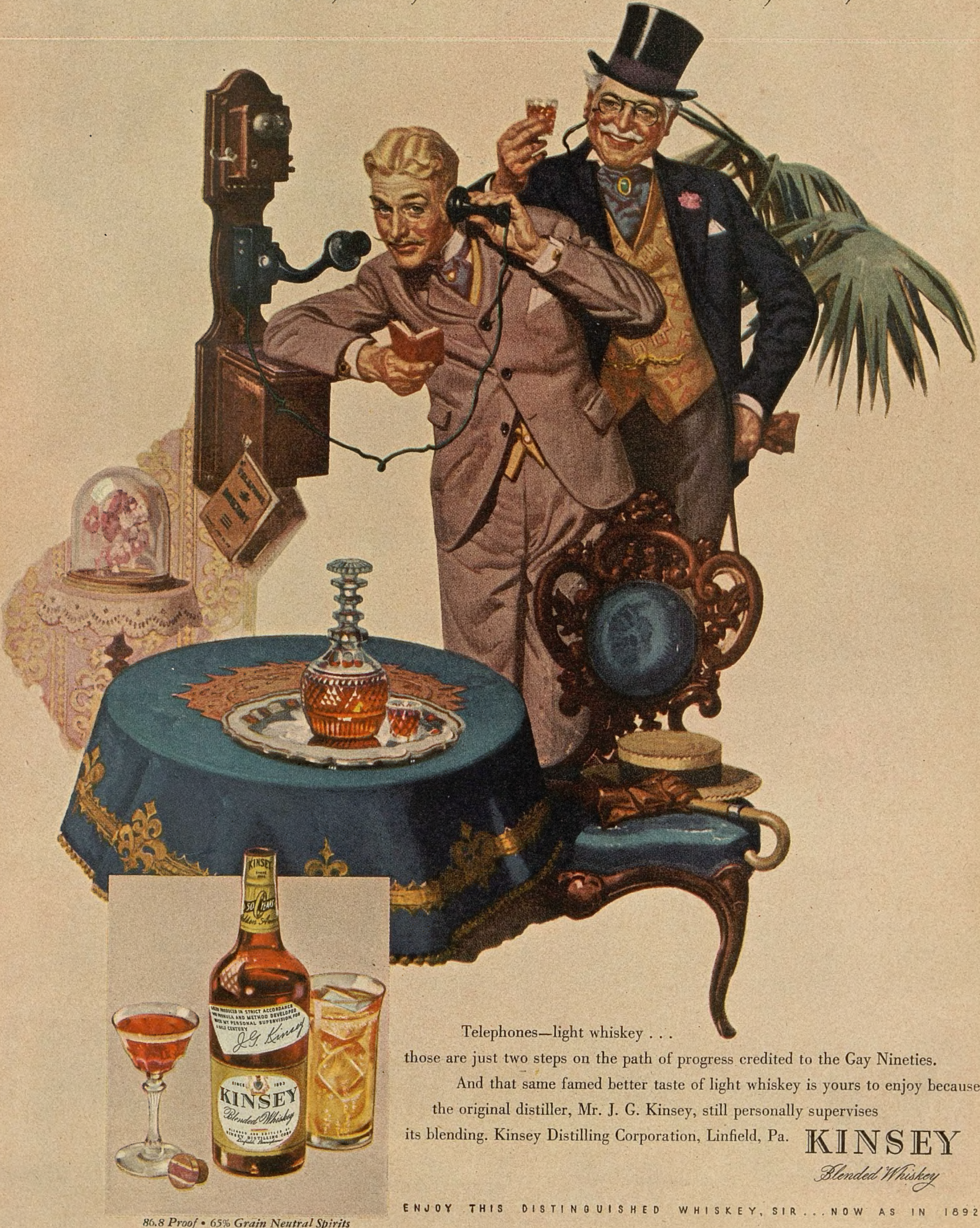
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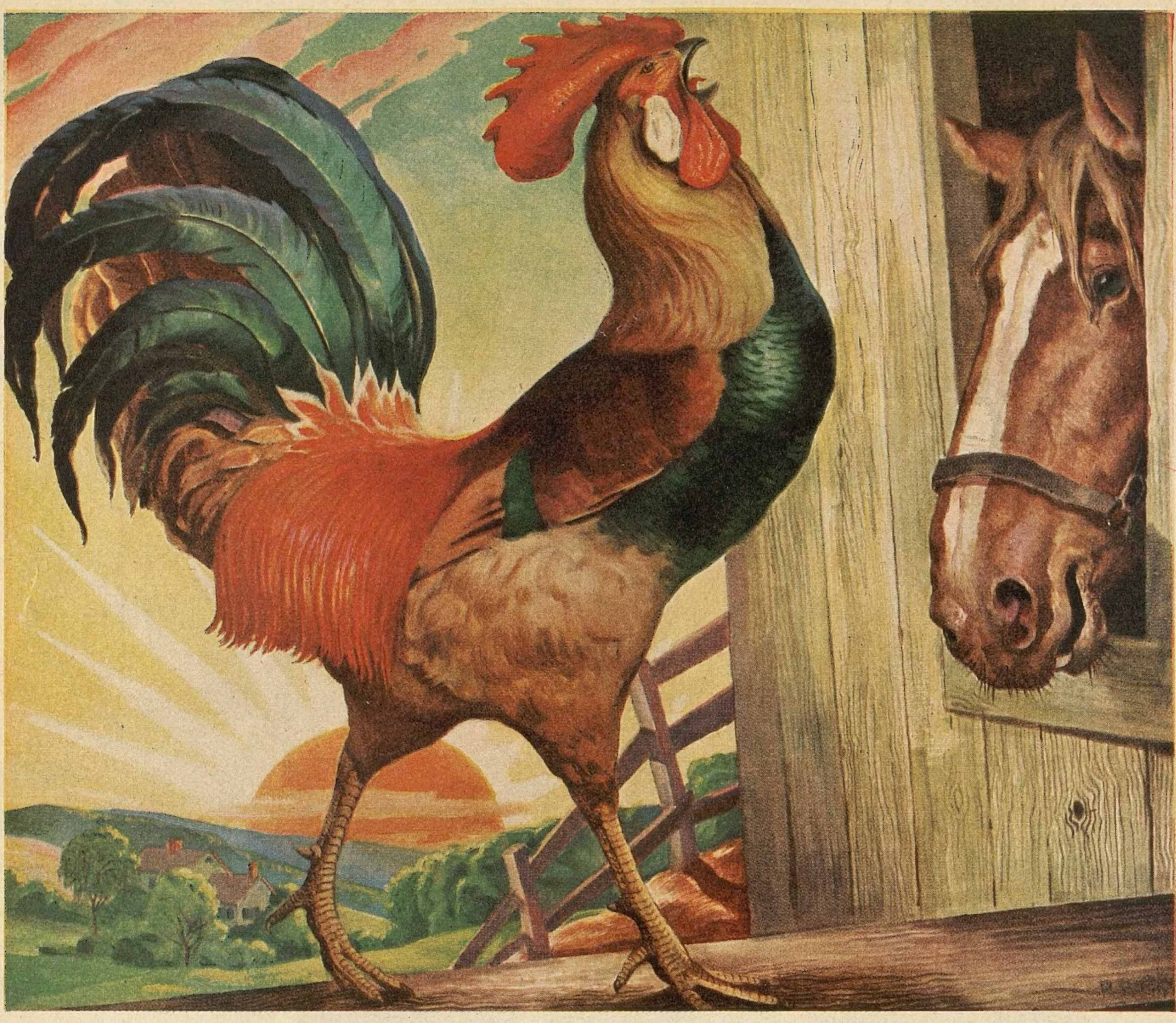

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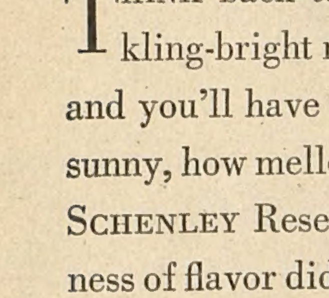

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